



H U D S O N ' S   B A Y   C O M P A N Y .  
(RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.)

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RETURN to an Address of The Honourable the House of Commons,  
dated 9 February 1849;—for,

"COPIES of any MEMORIALS presented to the COLONIAL OFFICE by  
INHABITANTS of the RED RIVER SETTLEMENT, complaining of the Govern-  
ment of the HU DSON'S BAY COMPANY; of the INSTRUCTIONS given to the  
GOVERNOR-GENERAL of CANADA for the Investigation of those Complaints;  
of the REPORTS of the Officers appointed by Lord Elgin, or by the  
COLONIAL OFFICE, for the purpose of such Investigation; and of any  
CORRESPONDENCE which has passed between the COLONIAL OFFICE and the  
HU DSON'S BAY COMPANY, and the INHABITANTS of the RED RIVER SETTLEMENT  
respectively, upon the subject of the above Memorial."

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Colonial Office, }  
20 April 1849.]

B. H A W E S.

(Earl of Lincoln.)

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Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be Printed,  
23 April 1849.

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COPIES of any MEMORIALS presented to the COLONIAL OFFICE by INHABITANTS of the RED RIVER SETTLEMENT, complaining of the Government of the HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY; of the INSTRUCTIONS given to the GOVERNOR-GENERAL of CANADA for the Investigation of those Complaints; of the REPORTS of the Officers appointed by Lord Elgin, or by the COLONIAL OFFICE, for the purpose of such Investigation; and of any CORRESPONDENCE which has passed between the COLONIAL OFFICE and the HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY, and the INHABITANTS of the RED RIVER SETTLEMENT respectively, upon the subject of the above Memorial.

## I.

## Memorial and Petition.

— No. 1. —

To the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

No. 1.

The humble MEMORIAL of the undersigned Deputies from the Natives of *Rupert's Land, North America.*

Memorial.

Most respectfully sheweth,  
THAT your memorialists are natives of Rupert's Land, North America, entrusted with the duty of presenting the accompanying petition from their fellow countrymen, the Indians and Half-breeds, residing in and near the colony of the Red River, praying for the redress of certain grievances.

That, from the harsh administration of the Hudson's Bay Company, discontent and misery prevail amongst the natives of Rupert's Land, to an unparalleled extent; and your memorialists are most anxious that Her Majesty's Government should, as early as possible, inquire into the condition of the unfortunate people, who are compelled to appeal to their Sovereign for protection, against the ruinous effects and consequences of the monopoly which the Hudson's Bay Company have so long enjoyed under a charter, that, according to some of the highest legal authorities, has long since lost its force. Your memorialists, trusting that a wise and paternal Government, distinguished for its attachment to a liberal policy and the principles of commercial freedom, will not suffer to pass unheeded the prayers of an oppressed and injured race, proceed to lay before your Lordship the grievances which gave rise to the accompanying petition, and humbly solicit your earnest attention to the same:

They complain, in the first instance,—That, by the practice of exclusive trading with the natives, which the Hudson's Bay Company assert is secured to them by Royal Charter, that Company has, for nearly, the last 200 years, to the utter impoverishment, if not ruin, of the natives, amassed a princely revenue, which, as your memorialists believe, now amounts to nearly a quarter of a million sterling per annum. Though one of the leading objects contemplated by the incorporation of the Company was the introduction of Christianity amongst the Indians, and the securing a due provision for their moral and religious improvement, little or none of the vast sums the Company has been permitted to accumulate has been devoted to such purposes.

That, on the contrary, with a view of keeping the natives in a state of utter dependence, and of perpetuating the wandering and precarious life of the hunter, on which they erroneously consider the existence of the fur trade to depend, they have permitted generation after generation of the hapless race consigned to their care to pass their lives in the darkest heathenism. There is not at present, nor, as your memorialists confidently believe, has there ever been, a single Indian school, church, or other establishment for religious and general instruction, established by the Company, throughout the whole of their extensive territories.

What

## 2 CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO COMPLAINTS OF

What little has been done for the religious and moral improvement of the natives is wholly due to the persevering exertions of the Church Missionary Society, and since the year 1839, of the Wesleyan Society of London. The Church Missionary Society receives no assistance whatsoever from the Company; and owing to the heavy expenses attending the establishment of Indian missions, its operations are necessarily very circumscribed. What assistance the Wesleyan missionaries receive from the Company, if indeed they receive any, your memorialists are not prepared to say. The other objects for which the charter was granted, namely, for improving the country by opening up its mineral and agricultural resources, and facilitating the means of internal navigation and transport, so as to fit it for a future colony, have been equally overlooked, with the like view of adding to the aggrandizement of the Company.

That the Company, after having entered into a solemn obligation with the British Government to discontinue the supply of spirituous liquors to the Indians, and after having actually abolished the trade in ardent spirits in some districts, for obvious purposes, for the first few years before and after the renewal of their last license, have again introduced this deadly and demoralizing poison, thus undoing the slight amount of good which the missionaries were beginning to effect, and interposing the greatest obstacle to their future success.

That, owing to the numerous hunting excursions which the demands of the fur trade render necessary, and to the great slaughter of animals consequent thereon, the only present resources of the country have been gradually diminishing to such an extent, that the larger part of the native population can no longer find the means of supporting life from the produce of the chase, or the natural productions of the soil. In the more northern parts of the country, from which all missionaries are rigorously excluded, and where the richest furs are obtained, but where the animals which supply the food of man have almost become extinct, as well as in many other districts, the Indians are exposed to the most frightful destitution. Numbers of them die yearly of famine, whilst others, in the extremity of want and despair, are tempted to commit the most revolting crimes to preserve a wretched existence. It is impossible for your Lordship's memorialists adequately to describe the sufferings of the natives who inhabit these portions of the country, arising from the exorbitant prices demanded by the traders for the wretched and almost valueless articles given in a mockery of exchange for the richest and most valuable furs. Without tents of any kind to protect them from the severity of an arctic climate, unable, from their migratory pursuits, to abide in permanent habitations, half naked, owing to the exorbitant prices demanded for the clothes furnished by the Company, whilst they are at the same time restricted from exchanging the produce of their toil with any other parties, kept constantly in the Company's debt, which they spend their whole lives in an ineffectual effort to clear off, exposed yearly to all the horrors of famine, and the attendant crimes of murder and cannibalism; the wretchedness of the people's condition can scarcely admit of addition. The scarcity which prevails in the northern districts is gradually but surely extending to the south, and unless the Government of this country interpose its paternal interference to wean the Indians from their present wandering habits, and endeavour to turn their attention to agricultural pursuits, the whole of the northern tribes must, at no distant period, when the resources of the chase shall have failed them, be subjected to all the horrors of a wide-spread famine, from which they never can emerge.

That, from the line of conduct pursued by the Company, it does not appear probable to your Lordship's memorialists that sufficient precaution will be taken by them to avert so overwhelming an evil. Their agents in the country are, for the most part, men of very limited information, and loose moralists; wholly imbued with the mere spirit of trade, few of them are possessed of those generous sympathies and enlarged views which are necessary for undertaking and carrying out any comprehensive scheme of social amelioration. Their deity is gold, to obtain which they trample down Christianity and benevolence.

That, feeling the utter inadequacy of the remuneration for their furs from the Company, many of the more enterprising of the natives have formed a resolution to export their own produce and import their own supplies, independently of the Company. They argue that, even supposing the charter to be still valid, and that it vests in the Company an exclusive right of trade to Hudson's Bay as against all other traders from Britain, none of its provisions are or can be binding on the natives to trade with the Company exclusively, or can prevent them from carrying their furs or other property out

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out of the country to the best market. Where this course has been adopted, however, the Company's agents have seized the furs of such parties as refused to sell them at the prices fixed by the Company, and, in some instances, have imprisoned the recusant natives. Against such gross aggressions on the rights and liberties of the natives, your memorialists most vehemently protest. Being unable to obtain redress from the local courts of the country, your memorialists feel entitled to claim the protection of the British Government, and humbly entreat your Lordship to take the case into your kind consideration.

It is likewise the painful duty of your Lordship's memorialists to advert to the precarious state of the public peace among the native population, particularly in and about the colony of the Red River. The majority of the Indians and half-breeds in that district depend mainly on the yearly buffalo hunts; the colony itself verging on the boundary line of the United States, the whole of the hunting grounds are within the American territories. From these grounds the American government has warned off the hunters of the Red River, in favour of the natives of the plains, who are under its protection, and for this purpose detachments of American troops are stationed throughout the plains to warn off all persons intruding from the British side, but at the same time proffering them the alternative of becoming American citizens. The Hudson's Bay Company, on the other hand, claim whatever is hunted on the British side of the line, distraining the goods and imprisoning the persons of those who refuse to accede to their prices. Owing to these conflicting claims, the natives, who are the original owners of the soil, have their energies and hopes completely paralysed, and are doomed to starvation, in a land which is their own both by birth and by descent.

Deeply convinced that the present appalling condition of the native population—their ignorance, their barbarism, and the sufferings and crimes consequent thereon, are ascribable to the present system of misgovernment, and also being fully satisfied that the existing evils would be remedied, and the still more fearful ones now pending averted by the adoption of a system founded upon more humane and enlightened views, your memorialists most earnestly desire to impress upon your Lordship the solemn and sacred duty of inquiring into the condition of this deeply suffering people (the last remnant of a noble race) before inquiry and remedy prove too late. Hitherto no efforts have been made in their behalf by the Government of this country, to which alone they can properly look for protection and justice. The occasional reports which have from time to time been forwarded to the Government of this country, at least such as have been made public, are destitute of truth, and were evidently framed with a view to mislead the colonial authorities, and avert further inquiry. To show this, we need only request your Lordship's attention to the report of Sir George Simpson,\* and beg of you to contrast them with a work published in 1845, intituled, "The Life and Travels of Thomas Simpson, by his brother Alexander." Though both brothers participated in the profits of the monopoly, and must therefore be presumed to be less than impartial witnesses, your Lordship will find that the book (published by Bentley, New Burlington-street) strongly sustains and corroborates the statements which we have the honour of laying before you.

The spirit and tendencies of the Hudson's Bay Company are, for reasons that will readily appear, opposed to the spread of information among the native population, and unfortunately they possess but too many facilities for carrying into effect the short-sighted and pernicious policy by which they have uniformly been guided in their intercourse with the natives. They are without direct or positive accountability to the Legislature of this country, and as regards their operations in the distant region over which they exercise jurisdiction, are practically beyond the reach of public opinion. Their sole aim is, avowedly, to draw the greatest possible revenue from the country, to attain which the considerations of humanity and religion are overlooked; while, as your Lordship will perceive by the statements now submitted, the lives of the unoffending native race, who for no fault of their own, and for no reason that can be given, are deprived of their inheritance and their natural rights, and thus of the power of helping themselves, are being virtually sacrificed year by year to the same selfish and iniquitous object. What must

\* See the Papers relative to the Hudson's Bay Company, printed by order of the House of Commons, 8 August 1842.

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must be the ultimate fate of this unhappy people, under such a system, it is as easy to foresee as it is painful to contemplate.

Your memorialists feel assured that upon a due consideration of the statements now brought forward, supported as they are by a weight of testimony which places their accuracy beyond dispute, your Lordship will extend to them that humane and considerate attention to which their great and urgent importance entitles them. What further corroboration may be deemed necessary in support of the above allegations, your memorialists are ready to supply, as well as to suggest such remedies as are calculated to remove the evils complained of—such remedies as a people, both willing and able to help themselves, but deprived of the power, alone require, to restore to them the blessings of peace and prosperity, and render them happy, contented and grateful subjects.

(signed)

*A. K. Isbister.*

*T. Vincent.*

*G. Sinclair.*

*D. V. Stewart.*

*J. M'Leod.*

*J. Isbister.*

17 February 1847.

No. 2.

Petition.

—No. 2.—

Nous soussignés, les humbles et loyaux sujets de sa Majesté Victoire, Reine des Royaumes Unis d'Angleterre, d'Ecosse et d'Irlande, &c. &c. &c., habitant un coin réculé de ses vastes domaines sur la Rivière Rouge, Département de la Baye d'Hudson, avons osé, avec un confiance entière, nous adresser à votre Seigneurie pour la supplier de déposer au pied du Trône et d'appuyer de son crédit les représentations et les demandes que nous exposons avec un humble respect dans la présent requête.

Attirés par de pompeuses promesses sur ce point du vaste territoire de la Baye d'Hudson, nos pères avoient espéré que les plans de feu Lord Selkirk seroient ponctuellement effectués; que, suivant les contrats en faveur des colons, leurs denrées, &c., seroient vendues à un prix suffisant, fixé dans ces dits contrats, et que les travaux du laboureur ne seroient pas paralysés par l'impuissance d'en vendre les produits. Toutes ces promesses ont été éludées, toutes ces espérances ont été frustrées.

Le monopole, qui depuis environ cent soixante et seize ans pèse sur nous, va toujours s'appesantissant, au point qu'il ne nous est plus permis de nous entre échanger des pelleteries de notre pays pour des effets importés, ou *vice versa*, sous peine d'être emprisonnés, ou de voir nos effets saisis sous le seul soupçon même qu'on doive les échanger pour des pelleteries. Cette sévérité a été poussée jusqu'au point de defendre de recevoir du payement pour des vivres procurés à des Indiens périssant de faim, à des distances éloignées de tout secours, vu que ce payement ne pouvoit être que des pelleteries, et nonobstant l'assurance de livrer les dites pelleteries au magazin de la Compagnie même, et au prix qu'elle en voudroit donner. Une sévérité si revoltante, pour ne pas dire inhumaine, a irrité tous les esprits, et quoiqu'on fût en partie disposé à souffrir encore longtems pour prévenir les émeutes et éviter les conséquences funeste d'une irritation à peu près générale, ne pouvant plus adresser nos plaintes au Gouverneur de la Compagnie, pour lequel le peuple n'a plus de confiance, nous prenons le seul moyen qui nous reste d'épargner le carnage et le sang, en déposant au pied du Trône nos humbles et respectueuses supplications.

1<sup>e</sup>. Comme sujets Britanniques, nous desirons ardemment être gouvernés d'après les principes de cette constitution qui rend heureux tout les nombreux sujets de notre auguste Souveraine.

La justice s'administrant ici par un juge sol de par la Compagnie, les Conseillers qui font les loix étant, ou créatures de la Compagnie, ou intéressés à ne point lui déplaire, étant tous, d'ailleurs, élus par le Gouverneur et le Comité de la dite Compagnie, il s'ensuit que le peuple éprouve un manque de confiance, et ne croit nullement à la possibilité d'avoir gain de cause en tout ce qui concerneroit la Compagnie,

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Compagnie, ou un ami, ou un favori d'icelle. Cette disposition des esprits, si dangereuse à la paix et à la tranquillité publique, n'existeroit pas, si le peuple, comme ailleurs dans les possessions Britanniques, avoit part aux loix qui se font, et si les jurisconsultes étoient indépendants de la Compagnie.

Nous osons humblement émettre la pensée où nous sommes, que des juges de paix ou magistrats, choisis parmi ceux que le peuple respecte et considère comme justes, aidés de jurés, seroit un mode de justice que pourroit encore suffire longtèmeins, ou du moins jusqu'à ce que les revenus municipaux puissent permettre les frais qu'exigeroit un cours de justice régulier.

2°. Comme sujets Britanniques, nous désirons et demandons avec instances, que cette liberté de commerce, si nécessaire à la prospérité des états et si puissamment maintenue par les loix dans toutes les autres possessions de notre auguste Souverain, nous soit accordée.

Par le monopole accordé à la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson, les habitants indigènes ont la pénible imposition de voir exportées toutes les richesses de leur pays au profit exclusif de commerçants étrangers, et tous les colons se voient dans la nécessité d'user d'effets importés, sans pouvoir faire exporter en échange aucun des produits de leur pays ; si quelques-fois certains commerçants particuliers ont voulu tenter de transporter quelques effets du pays, la Compagnie leur a suscité tant d'embarras qu'il leur a fallu s'en désister, et toujours au détriment du pays. Sous un pareil régime, le peuple est asservi à une espèce d'esclavage ; les efforts les plus énergiques de personnes industrieuses et douées de talents commerciaux sont neutralisés ; et sous cet état de choses, le mécontentement public ne peut qu'aller toujours croissant, jusqu'à ce qu'une explosion funeste à tous les partis s'en suive. Une parole de clémence de la bouche de notre Souverain nous sauvera de ces dangers en établissant la joie et la paix dans notre pays ; puis en donnant au commerce l'énergie qu'il tire de sa liberté, déposera sur notre sol, le germe de la prospérité.

3°. Nous supplions aussi, qu'il soit accordé au conseil municipal de notre pays de vendre des terres à ceux qui voudroient émigrer de pays étranger au nôtre ; et nous demandons instamment que pour un tems et à un taux fixé d'après le plaisir de sa Majesté, une somme soit prise, sur cette vente, pour améliorer les voies de transport.

Placés au centre de l'Amérique du Nord, à environ six cents milles de la Baie d'Hudson, le cours d'eau qui y communique est obstrué en divers endroits par des passages impraticables, où tous les effets sont transportés à bras, ce qui exige beaucoup d'hommes, beaucoup de tems, beaucoup de frais, et définitivement rend impossible l'export d'une très grande partie de nos produits.

Nos terres sont fertiles et aisées à cultiver. Le laboureur n'attend que l'espoir de pouvoir vendre pour se livrer avec énergie à un travail qui pourroit faire de ce pays un grenier à blé.

Nous sommes près de la ligne territoriale ; nous pourrions nous ranger sur le territoire voisin ; nous y sommes invités ; mais nous admirons la sagesse de la Constitution Britannique, et nous en désirons les priviléges.

Le désir sincère qu'a notre auguste Reine de rendre tous ses sujets heureux est connu jusqu'ici et au-delà ; nous espérons donc tout de sa clémence. En nous exauçant, Elle fera des heureux ; et nous prierons, &c. &c.

[With 977 Names attached.]

## II.

Instructions to the Governor-General of Canada, &c. to  
investigate Complaints.

No. 1.—

(No. 79.)

No. 1.

Earl Grey to  
Governor-general  
the Earl of Elgin,  
June 1847.Copy of a DESPATCH from Earl *Grey* to Governor-General the Earl of *Elgin*.  
(Answered by Lord *Elgin*, 6 June 1848, No. 73.—*Vide* Part III, p. 8.)

My Lord,

Downing-street, June 1847.

I TRANSMIT herewith to your Lordship the accompanying copies of representations which have been addressed to this office by Mr. A. K. Isbister and other persons composing a deputation from the natives of the Hudson's Bay Company's territories in North America; complaining of the conduct of the Company towards the inhabitants of that extensive region confided to its jurisdiction. I also enclose a copy of the defence made by the Chairman of the Hudson's Bay Company to those charges of maladministration; together with the copy of a precis, drawn up in this office, of the statements made on both sides, and copies of the answers which I have returned to the complainants and to the representative of the Company. I request your Lordship's attentive perusal of these papers, with the view of determining whether there are any means within your reach by which a more accurate knowledge of the proceedings of this Company towards the persons under their control can in future be obtained. It would be most desirable that the inhabitants of this portion of the British dominions should feel that they are not beyond the protection of the Queen's Government; and that although they are far removed from the Executive Government, they are not on that account precluded from obtaining redress for any injuries which they may be able to prove have been inflicted on them. I am not disposed to question the sincerity of the wish of the Hudson's Bay Company to administer their affairs in that country in a just and considerate spirit, but complaints will arise in all communities requiring investigation, and probably redress. I apprehend that the Hudson's Bay Company are not exempt from such occasional complaints, and considering the remote situation of the territory, I should be very glad if your Lordship could devise some mode of opening a communication between the inhabitants of that country and your Government, so as to ensure to them the increased protection of the British Crown, and an impartial administration of justice. It has been suggested to me that that might, to some extent, be effected through the agency of the Protestant and Roman Catholic Bishops in Canada, and the Head of the Wesleyan body in that province, who might acquire and report to your Lordship, from time to time, information from their clergy settled in the Hudson's Bay Company's territories, as to the state and progress of the people in that region. I should wish your Lordship to consider the practicability of this suggestion, and, if it can be rendered available, to take measures for procuring, through that agency, a specific report on the charges brought forward on the present occasion by Mr. Isbister.

I have, &c.  
(signed) *Grey*.

—No. 2.—

# THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

—No. 2.—

(No. 185.)

COPY of a DESPATCH from Earl Grey to Governor-General the Earl of Elgin.

My Lord,

I TRANSMIT, herewith, to your Lordship, the copy of a reply received from Mr. Isbister in the month of August last, to the report made to me by the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, upon the allegations of harshness and maladministration preferred against that Company by certain inhabitants of Rupert's Land. I also transmit to your Lordship the copy of a further letter from Mr. Isbister on the same subject; and I have to direct your Lordship's attention to my despatch, No. 79, of 4th June 1847, in which I instructed you to adopt such measures as might be practicable for instituting an examination into the charges brought against the Company. The distance of the Hudson's Bay territories from the seat of Government in Canada, and the difficulties attendant upon an investigation of this nature, are doubtless very considerable; and it will probably occupy some months in collecting information such as you can rely upon, to enable you to make your report; but I am anxious to have it in my power to inform the parties interested in the question in this country, that measures are in progress for inquiring into allegations against the Company; and therefore I request your Lordship to inform me, as soon as you can conveniently do so, what proceedings you have adopted in pursuance of my instructions, and how soon you expect to be able to furnish me with a report upon the subject.

No. 2.  
Earl Grey to  
Governor-general  
the Earl of Elgin,  
30 March 1848.

9 August 1847, See p. 53.  
22 March 1848,  
See p. 103.

I have, &c.

(signed) Grey.

—No. 3.—

(No. 251.)

COPY of a DESPATCH from Earl Grey to Governor-General the Earl of Elgin.

My Lord,

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch of the 6th June, on the subject of the charges of maladministration which have been preferred by Mr. Isbister against the Hudson's Bay Company.

As Her Majesty's Government expect to be furnished with further and more complete information respecting the Red River Settlement, from the officer recently appointed to the government of Assiniboia, I feel it only necessary to state, that I concur generally in the views which your Lordship has expressed in the despatch now before me.

No. 3.  
Earl Grey to  
Governor-general  
the Earl of Elgin,  
7 July 1848.

\* Vide p. 8.

I have, &c.

(signed) Grey.

—No. 4.—

COPY of a DESPATCH from B. Hawes, Esq., M. P., to the Governor of Assiniboia.

Sir,

Downing-street, 10 July 1848.

I AM directed by Earl Grey to acquaint you, that so soon as circumstances will admit after your arrival at Assiniboia, Her Majesty's Government will expect to receive from you a full and complete account of the condition of affairs at the Red River Settlement, and particularly of the mixed and Indian population living there; charges of maladministration and harsh conduct towards the natives having been preferred against the Hudson's Bay Company, which it is of the utmost importance should be either established or disproved. Her Majesty's Government expect from you, as an officer holding the Queen's Commission, a candid and detailed report of the state in which you find the settlement you have been selected to preside over.

No. 4.  
B. Hawes, Esq.,  
M. P., to the Governor of Assiniboia, 10 July 1848.

I would

## 8 CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO COMPLAINTS OF

I would particularly direct your attention to the allegations which have been made of an insufficient and partial administration of justice; of the embarrassments occasioned by the want of a circulating medium, except promissory notes payable in London; the insufficient supply of goods for ordinary consumption by the Company; and the hardships said to follow from an interference which is reported to be exercised in preventing half-bred inhabitants from dealing in furs with each other, on the ground that the privilege of the native Indians of the country do not extend to them. These, however, are only mentioned as instances, and your own judgment is relied on for inquiry into other points.

I have, &c.

(signed) *B. Hawes.*

No. 5:

Earl Grey to  
Governor-general  
the Earl of Elgin,  
8 February 1849.

Mr. Hawes to  
Sir J. Pelly, 23 Jan.  
1849, p. 114.  
Mr. Hawes to  
Mr. A. K. Isbister,  
23 Jan., p. 113.

— No. 5. —

EXTRACT of a DESPATCH from Earl *Grey* to Governor-General the Earl of *Elgin*; dated Downing-street, 8 February 1849.

I HEREWITH transmit, for your Lordship's information, copies of two letters which I have recently caused to be addressed to the Chairman of the Hudson's Bay Company, and to Mr. Isbister, stating the conclusion to which I have come with respect to the charges brought against the Company by Mr. Isbister.

I have, &c.

(signed) *Grey.*

## III.

### Reports received from the Governor-General, &c.

— No. 1. —

(No. 73.)

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor-General the Earl of *Elgin* to Earl *Grey*.  
(Answered by Earl Grey's Despatch, No. 251, 7 July.—Vide p. 7, Part II.)

Government-House, Montreal, 6 June 1848.

(Received 26 June 1848.)

No. 1.

Governor-general  
the Earl of Elgin  
to Earl *Grey*,  
6 June 1848.

My Lord,  
I HAVE had the honour to receive your despatch of the 30th March, covering the copy of a further letter from Mr. Isbister on the subject of certain allegations of hardship and maladministration preferred against the Hudson's Bay Company, and referring me to your despatch, No. 79, of June 1847, in which you instructed me to adopt such measures as might be practicable for instituting an examination into these charges. The subject of these communications has not failed to engage my attention, but the territory in question is so distant, so little intercourse takes place between it and Canada, and the jurisdiction of the Company is so peculiar, that it is by no means easy for me to obtain so perfect a knowledge of their proceedings as would enable me to furnish such a report as your Lordship requires.

2. I am bound, however, to state, that the result of the inquiries which I have hitherto made is highly favourable to the Company, and that it has left on my mind the impression that the authority which they exercise over the vast and inhospitable region subject to their jurisdiction, is on the whole very advantageous to the Indians. From Colonel Crofton, who resided for a considerable period at Red River, in command of a detachment of troops, I derived much valuable information with respect to their system of administration. More especially it would appear to be a settled principle of their policy to discountenance the use of ardent spirits. It is indeed possible that the progress of the Indians towards civilization may

## THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 9

may not correspond with the expectations of some of those who are interested in their welfare. But disappointments of this nature are experienced, I fear, in other quarters as well as in the territories of the Hudson's Bay Company; and persons to whom the trading privileges of the Company are obnoxious may be tempted to ascribe to their rule the existence of evils which it is altogether beyond their power to remedy. There is too much reason to fear, that if the trade were thrown open, and the Indians left to the mercy of the adventurers who might chance to engage in it, their condition would be greatly deteriorated.

3. At the same time I think it is to be regretted that a jurisdiction so extensive and peculiar, exercised by British subjects at such a distance, and so far beyond the control of public opinion, should be so entirely removed from the surveillance of Her Majesty's Government. The evil arising from this state of things is forcibly illustrated in the present instance by the difficulty which I experience in obtaining materials for a full and satisfactory report on the charges which your Lordship has referred to me. It were very desirable, if abuses do exist, that Government possessed the means of probing them to the bottom; and, on the other hand, it seems to be hard on the Company, if the imputations cast upon them be unfounded, that Government, which undertakes the investigation, should not have the power of acquitting them on testimony more unexceptionable than any which is at present procurable. It has been stated to me, that your Lordship has it in contemplation to establish a military officer at some point within the territories of the Company, and that the Company are disposed to afford every facility for carrying out this arrangement. I trust that this report may prove well founded. An officer so situated, if well selected, may render, I am inclined to believe, very valuable service. His presence will be regarded by the Indians and the settlers as a pledge of the interest taken by Great Britain in their welfare; he will exercise over the agents of the Company a salutary influence, while he will at the same time supply the channel through which accurate information respecting the proceedings of the Company may reach Her Majesty's Government, and useful advice, when necessary, be tendered in return.

I have, &c.

(signed) *Elgin & Kincardine.*

(See also the Reports of Colonel Crofton and Major Griffiths at pages 101 and 109 of this Paper).

## IV.

### Correspondence between the Colonial Office and the Hudson's Bay Company, and the Inhabitants of the Red River Settlement, &c., on the subject of the Memorial.

— No. 1. —

COPY of a LETTER from A. K. Isbister, Esq., to Earl Grey.

77, Jubilee-street, Mile-End-road,

6 February 1847.

No. 1.

My Lord,  
I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that a petition, accompanied by a memorial, is about to be laid before the Colonial Department for presentation to Her Majesty, from the native and half-caste Indians of that portion of British North America under the jurisdiction of the Hudson's Bay Company, with which view a deputation of natives from that country now await your Lordship's permission to lay the matter before you. The peculiar nature and importance of the question, and the magnitude of the interests involved in it, induce me, in the name of the deputation, most respectfully to request that you will be pleased to afford us an interview.

A. K. Isbister, Esq.  
6 February 1847.

I have, &c.

(signed) *A. Koonaubay Isbister.*

— No. 2. —

## — No. 2. —

COPY of a LETTER from *B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.*, to *A. K. Isbister, Esq.*

No. 2.

B. Hawes, Esq.,  
to A. K. Isbister,  
Esq.,  
12 February 1847.

Sir,

IN answer to your letter of the 6th instant, I am directed by Earl Grey to state, that before he can grant you the interview for which you have applied, his Lordship must request to be furnished with further information upon the subject which it is proposed to bring under his notice. With this view it will be the most convenient course that the memorial adverted to in your letter should be forwarded to this office, and after the perusal of it, his Lordship will be able to judge whether any advantage would result from an interview.

Downing-street, 12 February 1847.

I have, &amp;c.

(signed) *B. Hawes.*

## — No. 3. —

COPY of a LETTER from *A. K. Isbister, Esq.*, to *Earl Grey*.

No. 3.

A. K. Isbister, Esq.,  
to Earl Grey,  
17 February 1847.Vide Page 1 of this  
Return.

77, Jubilee-street, Mile-End-road,

17 February 1847.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge a communication from Mr. Hawes, of the 12th instant, in which he is directed by your Lordship, in reply to my request for an interview on behalf of the deputation from the natives of the Hudson's Bay Company's territories in North America, to state, that your Lordship is desirous, before granting an interview, to be furnished with further information on the subject it is proposed to bring under your notice. With this view I enclose, according to your Lordship's desire, a copy of the "Memorial" I adverted to in my letter of the 7th instant, from which your Lordship will learn the distressing condition of the native population of that extensive region, whose just and well-founded grievances we are most anxious to bring under the humane consideration of the British Government. As your Lordship's request is confined to the forwarding of the "Memorial," it may be necessary to state, that the "Petition," to which reference is there made, is addressed to Her most Gracious Majesty, and was drawn up by one of the clergymen at the settlement. It is signed by upwards of a thousand names of the leading Indians and half-breeds, who having been drawn to the little settlement on the Red River from all parts of the Indian country, may be considered as fitly representing the general body of their countrymen. It was intended that the "petition" and the "memorial" should have been presented together, as well for mutual elucidation and corroboration, as that the "petition" embodies some suggestions for the remedy of the existing evils, which it was hoped would recommend themselves to your Lordship's consideration. These remedies are all based upon the main and primary requisition for a Government to administer the affairs of the country—either the British Government directly, without the intervention of any middle party, as in other colonies, or a local Board with sufficient powers, appointed by and directly responsible to the Crown;—in any case it is most desirable that some effective check should be placed on the Hudson's Bay Company, who are rapidly alienating the affections of the resident population, both native and European, not only from themselves but from the British Government, who are unjustly supposed, by the less informed, to sanction the arbitrary proceedings of the Company.

It was mainly with a view of bringing such remedies as have been suggested under your Lordship's consideration, and to supply any necessary information on the subject, that an interview was, and is now again, earnestly requested.

I have, &amp;c.

(signed) *A. K. Isbister.*

## — No. 4. —

THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

11

-- No. 4. --

COPY of a LETTER from *B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.*, to *A. K. Isbister, Esq.*

Sir,

Downing-street, 5 March 1847.

I AM directed by Earl Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th ultimo, on the subject of the conduct of the Hudson's Bay Company towards the native inhabitants of Rupert's Land, British North America, and I am to inform you, that his Lordship has called upon the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company for a report upon the statement advanced in your memorial.

No. 4.

*B. Hawes, Esq., to  
A. K. Isbister, Esq.  
5 March 1847.*

I have, &c.

(signed) *B. Hawes.*

-- No. 5. --

COPY of a LETTER from *B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.*, to *Sir J. H. Pelly, Bart.*

Sir,

Downing-street, 5 March 1847.

I AM directed by Earl Grey to transmit to you the copy of a letter, dated 17th ultimo, from Mr. A. K. Isbister, enclosing a memorial signed by himself and other persons constituting a deputation from the natives of Rupert's Land in British North America, in which complaints are advanced of the conduct of the Hudson's Bay Company towards the native inhabitants of that place, and I am to request that you would favour Lord Grey with your report upon the statements contained in this memorial, at as early a period as you conveniently can.

No. 5.

*B. Hawes, Esq.,  
to Sir J. H. Pelly,  
Bart.,  
5 March 1847.*

*Vide p. 10.*

I have, &c.

(signed) *B. Hawes.*

-- No. 6. --

COPY of a LETTER from *A. K. Isbister, Esq.*, to *Earl Grey.*

77, Jubilee-street, Mile-End-road,

5 March 1847.

No. 6.

*A. K. Isbister, Esq.,  
to Earl Grey,  
5 March 1847.*

Enclosure 1, in  
this Letter.

Enclosure 2, in  
this Letter.

My Lord,

On re-consideration of the subject of the memorial from the natives of the Hudson's Bay Company's territories which I had the honour of transmitting to your Lordship on the 17th ultimo, it has been suggested to me, that the accompanying documents might be found useful, in regard of the additional information they supply on the subject which was then brought under your notice; viz. the condition of the numerous tribes scattered over the Indian territories, and the policy adopted towards them by their present rulers. I would particularly request your candid attention to the Report of the Rev. Henry Beaver, who was stationed for a short time at one of the Company's trading posts on the Columbia River, and is referred to by Sir George Simpson in his letter to Sir John H. Pelly (printed by order of the House of Commons) as "one of the Company's chaplains, under whose management several missions and schools had been established on the west side of the Rocky Mountains" (the Oregon territory). With a view also to exhibit the misstatements and misrepresentations of the Company in reference to the territories under their jurisdiction in a clearer form, I have drawn up a short Table, in which some of their more important statements are contrasted with the corresponding versions of the same facts, as given in the published statements of Mr. Alexander Simpson and Mr. Beaver, the former of whom was 14 years in the Company's service, in which he rose to be a partner, which I believe he is still, and the other, as already stated, is an English clergyman, some time resident in the country, and an actual eye-witness of the facts he relates. Were I not apprehensive of trespassing too largely upon your Lordship's valuable time, I would have laid before you some further statements of Mr. Beaver's in reference to the condition of the native population, particularly one addressed to the Committee of the Anti-Slavery Convention, in which the practice "of holding some of the natives in a state of slavery by persons of all classes in the

Company's

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Enclosure 3, in this Letter.

Company's service," is detailed, particularly the native women, "who are purchased from their Indian relations or proprietors, and not unfrequently resold amongst each other by their purchasers." Enough, however, will be gathered from the accompanying documents to convince your Lordship of the necessity of that legislative interference for which we pray. I also enclose a copy of an Opinion, alluded to in our memorial, given some years ago by Messrs. Pigott, Spankie and Brougham, on the validity of the Hudson's Bay Company's Charter, where your Lordship will find it most clearly and conclusively demonstrated that this instrument, on which the Hudson's Bay Company found their extraordinary pretensions, has long since lost its force.

I have, &amp;c.

(signed) A. K. Isbister.

## Enclosure 1, in No. 6.

LETTER from Rev. Mr. Beaver, referred to by Mr. Isbister, and enclosed in that Gentleman's Letter of 5 March 1847.

(Extracted from Tract No. 8 of the Aborigines' Protection Society, of 1842.)

LETTER of Herbert Beaver, relating to the Indians on the North-west Coast of America, to the Committee of the Aborigines' Protection Society.

Gentlemen,

Encl. 1, in No. 6.

I PROCEED to furnish you with such information respecting the present condition of the Indians on the North-west coast of America, more particularly as it is affected by their intercourse with foreigners, as I was enabled to obtain during a residence of more than two years in the capacity of chaplain, at the Hudson's Bay Company's settlements on the River Columbia. I resided at Fort Vancouver, the Company's principal dépôt west of the Rocky Mountains, from the beginning of September 1836, to the end of October 1838, and during that time had ample opportunities of observing the moral, social, political and intellectual state of our red brethren in its neighbourhood. From time to time I reported to the Governor and Committee of the Company in England, and to the Governor and Council of the Company abroad, the result of my observations, with a view to the gradual amelioration of the wretched degradation with which I was surrounded, by an immediate attempt at the introduction of civilization and Christianity among one or more of the aboriginal tribes; but my earnest representations were neither attended to nor acted upon; no means were placed at my disposal for carrying out the plans which I suggested.

I also became acquainted with many acts of cruelty and murder committed upon natives by persons in the Company's service, some of which I narrated by letter to the Deputy-governor of the Company at home, and to the Governor of the Company's foreign possessions, in the hope that a stop might be put to the recurrence of these horrible atrocities; but from both I incurred a rebuke for my undue interference in matters which did not professionally concern me. I therefore rejoice in an opportunity afforded me by the Aborigines' Society of bringing to light some of those hidden things of darkness, as well as of making public some statements regarding the interesting people among whom I so long sojourned, in order that humanity and religion may alike be roused to prevent their oppression and promote their salvation.

Although the trade in peltry is undoubtedly one of the grand means of civilizing and evangelizing the North American Indians, and although the Hudson's Bay Company, in whose name and interests those of the North-West Company have merged, owes its entire prosperity, nay, its very existence, to commerce with the natives of the well-nigh unlimited territory over which it exercises a nearly uncontrolled sway, yet little has hitherto been done by the Company on the east side of the Rocky Mountains, and nothing on the west side, towards advancing in the scale of creation the innumerable tribes of untold rational and immortal beings whose most important destinies have for the last 170 years been placed in its hands.

Of the state of the aboriginal inhabitants of the eastern side of the continent, considerable intelligence has, through various channels, been communicated; none, or but little authentic, of that of those of the western; and it is only with reference to a small part of these that I can now offer the result of personal inquiry.

Taking Fort Vancouver as the centre of a circle, having one of its radii extending to the sea, about 90 miles distant, there are within the circumference about 12 distinct tribes of Indians, each speaking a different language, and comprising an average of 200 souls; with two of these, the Chinook and Klickatack, I was most conversant, having freely mixed with them on many occasions, as some of both were continually in the vicinity of the fort. In manners and customs these tribes differ essentially from each other, and as a similarity in these respects to one or other of them exists among the neighbouring tribes, I conceive that an account of them may serve as a tolerable guide to an acquaintance with those of whom I could obtain but a scanty personal knowledge, from their not so much frequenting the post at which I was stationed during my residence in the country.

The

The Chinook is a fishing tribe, dwelling on the banks of the river, and using canoes; the Klickatack is a hunting tribe, dwelling in the plains, and using horses. The latter is a much finer race than the former, both in appearance and disposition. The common dress of the Chinooks, both male and female, is a blanket, to which the females add a kilt or short petticoat, while the Klickatacks men are seldom seen without a capot shirt and pair of leggings, and the women are not unfrequently clothed in coarse cloth gowns. The Chinook women wear nothing on their heads, and those of the men are often without a covering; but the female Klickatack has always a cap of plaited grass, and the male one of fur or some other material. The arms and accoutrements of the one are also kept in a much more cleanly and efficient style than are those of the other. The persons, too, of the Klickatacks, both men and women, are far more pleasing than those of the Chinooks, who from squatting continually in their canoes, on their heels (the posture of paddling), contract a habit of stooping, and a very inactive gait, while the others are upright, and walk with an elastic step. The figures of the Chinook women are often disgustingly obese; those of the Klickatack are generally straight, and sometimes almost beautiful.

But the greatest point of difference between the two tribes relates to their moral qualities. The Chinooks, in consequence of their greater intercourse with sailors, and the other lower servants of the Company, are excessively depraved. Their women, especially, are as accomplished courtesans as any upon the face of the whole earth; inferior to none in profligacy, disease and extravagance. No instance came to my knowledge, or at least but one, and that uncertain, of a Klickatack woman misconducting herself with a white man. It is true that polygamy is practised by both tribes, and that capricious divorces sometimes take place; but this is a native custom, in which they know no harm, and vastly to be distinguished from those exotic vices which have been implanted in the aboriginal soil.

Among crimes which are certainly not indigenous, infanticide stands foremost. It is committed by the mother, or at her desire, but never when an Indian is the father, generally in consequence of the desertion of the white father. Abortion is likewise resorted to with the design of not putting him to the expense and trouble of maintaining his offspring. Yet the unhallowed connexions which lead to these crimes are permitted; nay, encouraged by the Company, who might easily restrain them. Infidelity in Indian women living with their natural husbands is of rare occurrence; that of those living with the lower servants of the Company notoriously common. Of its dreadful effects let the records of the hospital at Vancouver testify. Nor are the ravages of the malady alluded to confined to that spot; I believe that the blood of the whole Chinook race is tainted with it, and that through the agency of sailors it is disseminated along the coast for hundreds of miles, and perpetuated at the other posts of the Company.

While the tide of demoralization thus overspreads with irresistible violence the only regions where he can at present exist, the efforts of the missionary must be feeble, if not altogether useless. It is an observation, never more truly exemplified than at the Company's settlements, that wherever the Gospel has been carried among modern heathen nations, there, simultaneously, has vice, before unknown, been imported; and that the lives of the professors of Christianity are the most fatal hinderances to its being embraced by even the most uncultivated savages. The Indians with whom I conversed were, for the most part, intelligent and argumentative, and drew conclusions, not from what they heard, but from what they saw; and assuredly they saw no recommendation of religion in the example of the generality of the Company's servants, with whom its precepts seemed to be in almost total abeyance.

One great cause of the immorality at the place where I was stationed, and a consequent barrier to the improvement and conversion of the Indians, was the holding of some of them in a state of slavery by persons of all classes in the Company's service, and by those who have retired from it, and become settlers on the rivers Willamette and Cowlitye, but over whom the Company retain authority. The whole number of these wretched beings amounted to between 80 and 90. They were miserably clothed and fed, nor was it possible that they could receive any instruction while they continued in their very degraded condition. I knew some of them to be flogged by order of the officer in charge of the establishment, and others to be cruelly ill-used by their owners. The women themselves, who were living with the lower class of the Company's servants, were much in the condition of slaves, being purchased of their Indian proprietors or relations, and not unfrequently re-sold amongst each other by their purchasers. But I forbear to add more upon this part of my subject, having communicated full information respecting it to the Committee of the Anti-slavery Convention, by whom my communication has been published.

Besides these standing evils, to which the aborigines are subjected by their intercourse with the Hudson's Bay Company, several most atrocious outrages, committed upon them by persons in the Company's service, came to my knowledge. Soon after my arrival at Vancouver, I was informed by many persons, one of whom had nearly been an eye-witness of the transaction, having been invited to assist in holding down the unhappy sufferer, that in the month of February 1835, a most infamous outrage, which cannot here be more particularly described, was committed upon the person of an Indian, not, however, as a necessary surgical operation, by the surgeon of the establishment, but with the connivance and permission, if not by the order of the officer in charge.

About the middle of the summer 1836, and shortly before my arrival at Vancouver, six Indians were wantonly and gratuitously murdered by a party of trappers and sailors, who landed for the purpose from one of the Company's vessels on the coast somewhere between the mouth of the river Columbia and the confines of California. Having on a former occasion

read

## CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO COMPLAINTS OF

read the particulars of this horrid massacre, as I received them from an eye-witness, before a meeting of the Aborigines' Society, I will not now repeat them. To my certain knowledge, the circumstance was brought officially before the authorities of Vancouver, by whom no notice was taken of it; and the same party of trappers, with the same leader, one of the most infamous murderers of a murderous fraternity, is annually sent to the same vicinity to perform, if they please, other equally tragic scenes. God alone knows how many red men's lives have been sacrificed by them since the time of which I have been speaking. He also knows that I speak the conviction of my mind, and may He forgive me if I speak unadvisedly, when I state my firm belief that the life of an Indian was never yet by a trapper put in competition with a beaver's skin. The very way in which the aborigines are spoken of by the trappers and leaders of trapping parties, goes far to prove the correctness of my assertion. "Those d---d," "those rascally," "those treacherous" Indians, are the unmerited appellations by which the race is universally designated.

In the former part of the same year, I was credibly informed, that the same party killed one Indian, wounded another, supposed mortally, and threw a child into a fire, in consequence of a quarrel respecting a knife, which was afterwards found upon one of themselves. And during the year before, they put four Indians to death for stealing their horses, which might be pleaded as some excuse for the brutality, but that they afterwards killed 10 or 12 more in cold blood, and set fire to their village. The Indians lived in such constant dread of this party, that they were unable to descend into the plains from their fastnesses in the mountains, to procure their usual modes of subsistence. Do not these things imperatively demand inquiry and interference? Is not such treatment as I have narrated of their red brethren unbecoming to persons who profess the religion of the Prince of Peace, and to persons, who, ignorant themselves of the precepts of Christianity, may be in the service of such professors? Yet these acts are not only committed and winked at, but opportunities are even furnished for their recurrence. It should never be forgotten that the Hudson's Bay Company are but as invaders of the soil on which these excesses are committed by their servants, and that as such, the least they can do is to restrain all unnecessary violence towards the rightful possessors, both of it and of the furs which it produces, not for the benefit of the aborigines, but for the promotion of far distant mercantile interests. If it be asserted that resistance against Indian aggression is indispensable, or that retaliation is necessary to ensure future safety, I maintain that the white man has no right to intrude himself into a country against the wishes of its inhabitants. If it be said that they make no use, or not a proper use, of its productions, I would ask, have they not a right to do what they will with their own? But I apprehend that if the Indian had always been treated as he ought to have been by the white man, he would never have resorted to acts of violence to expel from his country him whom constant ill-usage has taught him to regard as his natural enemy. And, with respect to the furs of that country, to rob their lawful owner of them, by taking possession of them, either with no payment or a most inadequate one, is surely not a legitimate method of teaching him their proper use and value. Of articles bartered by the Company for peltry and other native produce, one-half may be classed as useless, one quarter as pernicious and the remainder as of doubtful utility; for I cannot but consider of very questionable utility, in the real sense of the word, even that clothing for which the natives are servilely dependent on the Company, and for which they have long since discarded the vestments which their own country spontaneously affords.

Were I to dilate upon the ruinous consequences to our red brethren, which have ensued upon their intercourse with whites, and to narrate all I heard and knew of their ill-usage by the latter, I should far exceed the limits of this communication. I have attempted to embody the information of which I am possessed in a publication, which I hope will soon be ready for the press. In the mean time, I have to express my readiness to reply most fully and freely to any inquiries which may be made with a view to ameliorate the condition of the aborigines of the North-west Coast; nor may it be irrelevant from the designs of a society formed for their protection, if I were to state some facts relative to that of the Sandwich Islanders in the Company's service.

There is a considerable number of them in the service scattered all over the continent, from 12 to 20 being imported about every other year from their native country, which is three or four weeks' sail from the Columbia River, and few ever returning home again. Their condition is little better than that of slavery, being subject to all the imperious treatment which their employers may think fit to lay on them, whether by flogging, imprisonment or otherwise, without a possibility of obtaining redress. Each of them, before embarkation in their own country, receives a small advance of money, part of which their chiefs seize as a bonus for permitting them to have it, and for relinquishing all future claim to their services. The remainder is usually squandered; so that when they arrive in a colder climate they are destitute of adequate clothing, the supply of which generally consumed the whole of their wages for the first year. Nor are they afterwards able to save much of these, for all their necessaries are charged at the rate of 100 per cent. upon the invoice price, that is double the value of the goods in England; whereas only 50 per cent. addition to the prime cost is charged to the other servants of the Company. This difference is made in order to compensate the Company for the nominal payments to the Sandwich Islanders of higher wages than are given to their other servants of the same class. While others receive 17*l.* per annum, they receive 30*l.*, or 10 dollars per month; by which tempting offer this simple but amiable people are induced to enter the service. In reality, therefore, they are worse paid than others, although their ignorance of the value of money, and their confiding disposition prevent them from being cognizant of the deception and imposition thus shamefully practised upon them.

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But these are not all the grievances of which they have to complain. During my residence at Vancouver, one of them was confined there in irons for the space of five months and four days, during which he was never released from his handcuffs; and this for no fault at all, only for a supposed dereliction of duty, which afterwards turned out not to be the case. At the commencement of his imprisonment for the same imputed offence, he received 40 lashes on his bare back; and during the continuance of it he was attacked with intermittent fever, which being reported to the officer in charge of the establishment, his humane reply was, "Let him shake and be d---d!" nor was the poor fellow released from his irons even under that afflictive circumstance. The same man had been flogged on a previous occasion for accidentally losing a canoe, the value of which was charged against his account, being thus made to pay for the same fault, if it was one, both in his person and in his pocket.

I knew another Sandwich Islander to be severely flogged, though bearing a general good character, for making a trifling mistake, unattended by any injury to the service, with respect to some orders which he had received, and which, from his ignorance of the language in which they were conveyed, he probably had not understood. I knew another die in the hospital, as was generally supposed, in consequence of a wound inflicted on his head by the commander of one of the Company's vessels. His countrymen made a complaint to the officer in charge, by whom it was not entertained, nor was any investigation instituted. The surgeon affirmed that he died of apoplexy. I will not put my judgment in competition with the professional; I will only state, that from the time when the poor man came into the hospital until that of his death, which was several days, he was continually convulsed, having a sort of paralytic motion, or catching of the head and neck.

In the year 1832, as I was informed by the commander of the vessel in which he was proceeding to his native country, as well as by several others, a Sandwich Islander died on board, and that his death was attributed to a flogging which he had received for stealing a pig. But I have said enough to prove the oppression practised towards these helpless people. Perhaps the most deplorable part of their condition is, that they soon lose the Christian instruction which has been imparted to them by their excellent missionaries at home; they revert to the abominable practices of their idolatrous times, and form connexions with the Indians, to whose level they speedily sink. On my second visit to Oahu, I had the satisfaction, in consequence of my representations, and those of some of their subjects who had returned, of learning that the king and the chiefs had issued a decree that no more of them should enter the Company's service. How long cupidity may permit the observance of this decree, I am unable to conjecture; but even should it be acted upon, there will still remain in the Company's service a sufficient number, with their offspring, of those interesting islanders to attract the attention of the humane.

Should the society desire it, I shall have much pleasure in communicating the plans which I have suggested, and which I should wish to see adopted, for the improvement of their condition, and likewise for the improvement of that of some of the aboriginal tribes of the North-west Coast, particularly the Klickatack, to which I chiefly directed my attention and that of the Company, as being most likely to benefit by missionary enterprise.

Since writing the above, I have learned from good authority that in the month of August 1840, an Indian was hanged near the mouth of the Columbia River, and several others shot, and their village set on fire, by a party in the employment of the Hudson's Bay Company, under the command of chief factor M'Loughlin, who led them from Fort Vancouver, thus indiscriminately to revenge the death of a man who lost his life in an affray while curing salmon.

(signed) *Herbert Beaver.*

Enclosure 2, in No. 6.

THE annexed Tariff exhibits the prices paid by the Hudson's Bay Company to the natives for their furs in that portion of their territories denominated the Mackenzie's River District, which extends from Fort Chipewyan, on the Athabasca Lake, to the Arctic Ocean. With some unimportant modifications, it may be considered as regulating the trade of the whole country situated to the north of the Saskatchewan River, where the effects of the opposition along the United States frontier beginning to be felt, it becomes necessary to adopt a more favourable standard of exchange. It is the natives of this extensive region whose deplorable condition is described in the memorial.

	Number of Skins.		Number of Skins.
One common gun	20	One blanket, 2 pt. plain (largest size)	5
One gill powder	1	One ditto 1½	3
Eighteen leaden bullets	1	One ditto 1	2
Eight charges of shot	1	One ditto 3 (striped)	12
One blanket, 3 pt. plain (largest size)	10	One ditto 2	10
One ditto 2½	8	One axe (the largest)	3

	Number of Skins.		Number of Skins.
One axe (the smallest)	2	One fire steel	1
One kettle, 9 gallons	20	Half-a-dozen clay pipes	1
One ditto, 6 "	16	One dozen brass rings	2
One ditto, 3 "	12	One yard of coarse cloth	6
One lb. beads	6	One worsted sash, 4 inches	3
Two feet twist tobacco	1	One - ditto 3 "	2
One dozen brass ball buttons	1	One common comb	1
One man's coat	12	One pair of ear-rings (brass) from	2 to 5
One ditto	10	Half-a-dozen nose and ear trinkets	1
One youth's ditto	8	One ounce vermillion	1
One ditto	6	Half-pint of rum, or rather a mix- ture composed of nine parts water and one part rum	1
One boy's ditto	5	One common cotton shirt	3
One ditto	4	One vest	6
One child's ditto	3	One pair trousers	9
One iron scalping knife	1	Six yards gartering	1
One file, 10 inches	5	Two fishing hooks (trout)	1
One ditto 9 "	4	One pair scissors	1
One ditto 8 "	3	One moose skin, purchased by the Company from Indians in one	
One ditto 7 "	2	part of the country, and re-sold	2 & 3
One ditto 6 "	2	where the animals have been hunted up	
One ditto 5 "	1½		
Ten gun-flints	1		
Eight awls	1		
Seven needles	1		

The "skin" is an arbitrary standard, adopted by the Company, and does not mean the skin of one animal; thus, a full-grown beaver is reckoned "one skin," but it requires 4 mink skins, 3 marten skins, 2 fox skins, 12 musquash, &c. to make a "skin." A common gun will thus bring 20 beaver skins, or 20 bear skins, 80 minks, 60 martens, 40 foxes and 240 musquash.

It ought to be mentioned, that the above tariff is employed in "that portion of the country embraced within the Royal License" (as distinguished from the Company's proper territories, included within the charter), where, according to Sir J. H. Pelly "the trade is yet of very little benefit to the Company, and affords greater advantages to the mother country in the employment of shipping, and in the revenue arising from imports and exports, than the Company derive from it." Fifty per cent. on the prime cost is considered to cover the expenses of freight, &c. of the goods used in barter.

A. K. Isbister.

IT being evident that the Hudson's Bay Company obtained the renewal of their recent "grant of exclusive trade with the Indians in certain parts of North America," on the strength of the reports submitted by them in 1837 to Her Majesty's Government, inducing a very general impression that the Company's proceedings had appeared of late to be distinguished generally by a liberal and enlightened policy, for which and similar reasons it was deemed unadvisable to withdraw from them the powers which they at present exercise; I am desirous of making a few observations on the subject of these reports, and of drawing attention to the numerous inaccuracies and misrepresentations which they contain.

The grounds on which the Hudson's Bay Company rest their claims for the renewal of their license of exclusive trade, may be reduced to these three:

1. The alleged increase and improvement of the native population, through their means, since the exclusive management fell into their hands.
2. The improvement of the country itself by the formation of agricultural settlements within its limits, and the establishment of valuable branches of an export trade in wool, flax and other natural productions of the country.
3. The advantages accruing to the general commercial interests of Great Britain from the monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Sir J. H. Pelly, Governor of the Company, in his letter to the Lords of the Privy Council for Trade, states as the results of the exclusive license of the Hudson's Bay Company, "that the peace and tranquillity of the country has been restored; that the abuse of spirituous liquors has been discontinued; that the condition of the native population is greatly ameliorated; and that the commercial interests of Great Britain are improving under the management of the Hudson's Bay Company."

With respect to the improvement of the commercial interests of Great Britain under the management of the Hudson's Bay Company, considering that in the present instance the interests of Great Britain are represented by those of the Hudson's Bay Company, there appears no reason to dispute the accuracy of the statement. The restoration of peace and tranquillity to the country, which but for the dissensions of rival traders had never been disturbed,

## THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

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disturbed, followed as a natural consequence on the investitures of the Hudson's Bay Company with their present exclusive privileges. What merit that body can claim on this score does not, under these circumstances, appear very clear. My purpose at present having more immediate reference to the country and the native inhabitants, I, however, pass over these and similar claims set up by the Company, and proceed to the examination of the statements made by Sir J. H. Pelly and Sir George Simpson, in reference to what has been done for the improvement of the country and the native population, of whose condition, as well as of the policy of the Hudson's Bay Company, I claim to have some knowledge. As has been already stated in the Memorial to Earl Grey, these statements (in the sense in which they were evidently intended to be understood) are entirely devoid of truth; and it will be well to observe here, that there is in this case the testimony of a whole people, through their representatives, to be weighed against the assertions of two men having a direct and to them important object in view in the statements they advanced. I am desirous, however, of contrasting the reports of Sir J. H. Pelly and Sir George Simpson with the published statements of two other individuals, with equal, if not superior, means of information, both at least speaking from personal knowledge, and who being connected with the Company, will not be accused of any undue prepossessions against them. The individuals to whom I allude are Mr. Alexander Simpson, brother of the enterprising Arctic discoverer of that name, who was 14 years in the Company's service, in which he rose to be a partner, and Mr. Beaver, a clergyman in connection with the Church Missionary Society, who officiated for two years as chaplain at one of the Company's posts on the west side of the Rocky Mountains, and on his return to England addressed the letter to the Aboriginal Society, relating to the Indians on the North-west Coast, which accompanies this.

### STATEMENTS exhibiting the Policy of the Hudson's Bay Company towards the Natives.

**EXTRACTS** from the Reports of Sir *J. H. Pelly*, and Sir *G. Simpson*, Governors of the Hudson's Bay Company, submitted to the British Government on applying for the renewal of the exclusive license of the Company in 1837.—(Printed by Order of The House of Commons, 8 August 1842).

"DURING the competition in trade previous to the year 1821 (when the exclusive management fell into the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company), it was found impossible to take any effectual measure towards the civilization or moral and religious improvement of the native population. Since that period the Company have established two Protestant missions, under the management of their chaplains at Red River Settlement, where there are likewise two Catholic missions and 13 schools.

"It is gratifying to be enabled to say that the zealous endeavours of our missionaries have been most successful.

"The Hudson's Bay Company have likewise established missions and schools at several of their principal depots or posts on the Columbia River, west side of the Rocky Mountains, under the management of another of their chaplains." (Mr. Beaver, the only clergyman who ever entered that part of the Company's territories).—*Report of Sir George Simpson*, p. 16.

"The employment we afford at those seasons to many of the Indians, whereby they are brought into frequent communication and intercourse with our officers and servants, tends towards their gradual civilization and improvement, and we find our own interests promoted by an equitable and liberal system of trade and management.

"I have no hesitation in saying that the native population of the countries through which the Hudson's Bay Company's business extends, never derived any real benefit from their intercourse with the whites until the fur

**EXTRACTS** from the "Life of Thomas Simpson, by his brother Alexander." Bentley, New Burlington-street, 1845; and a "Letter of the Rev. Herbert Beaver, relating to the Indians on the North-west Coast of America, to the Aborigines Protection Society" (accompanying this).

"THIS extensive field\* for missionary enterprise was unoccupied until the year 1839, when the attention of the Wesleyan Conference of Canada was directed towards it."—*Simpson's Life and Travels*, p. 432.

"Although the Hudson's Bay Company owes its entire prosperity, nay its very existence, to commerce with the natives of the well-nigh unlimited territory over which it exercises a nearly uncontrolled sway; yet little has hitherto been done by the Company on the east side of the Rocky Mountains, and nothing on the west side, towards advancing in the scale of creation the innumerable tribes of untold, rational and immortal beings whose most important destinies have for the last 170 years been placed in its hands."—*Beaver*, p. 16.

"God knows that I speak the conviction of my mind, and may He forgive me if I speak unadvisedly when I state my firm belief that the life of an Indian was never yet, by a trapper, put in competition with a beaver skin."—*Ibid.* p. 19.

"An awful fatality seems to overhang the retiring members of the Company, a punishment for the unprincipled and licentious lives they have led."—*Simpson's Life and Travels*, p. 81.

"It is an observation never more truly exemplified than at the Company's settlements, that wherever the Gospel has been carried among modern heathen nations, there simultaneously has vice, before unknown, been imported. Assuredly the Indians saw no recommendation of religion in the example of the generality of the Company's servants, with

\* The Hudson's Bay Company's Territories.

STATEMENTS exhibiting the Policy of the *Hudson's Bay Company* to the Natives—*continued.*

fur trade became exercised under the existing license. In proof of this, the population of some of the tribes previous to that time sensibly diminishing, is now increasing."—*Report of Sir George Simpson*, p. 16.

"On the banks of the Columbia River we are directing our attention to agriculture on a large scale. I have also the satisfaction to say, that the native population are beginning to profit by our example, as many, formerly dependent on hunting and fishing, now maintain themselves by the produce of the soil."—*Ibid.*

"At the Red River and Columbia schools Indian children are educated, belonging to many of the distant tribes. We are using our utmost endeavours in every other part of the country, where the climate and soil admit of it, to collect the Indians into villages, and direct their attention to agriculture, as the first step towards civilization."—*Ibid.*

with whom its precepts seemed to be in almost total abeyance."—*Simpson's Life and Travels*, p. 81.

"One great cause of the immorality at the place where I was stationed, and a consequent barrier to the improvement and conversion of the Indians, was the holding of some of them in a state of slavery by persons of all classes in the Company's service, and by those who have retired from it, and become settlers on the Rivers Willamette and Cowlitz, but over whom the Company retain authority. The women themselves who were living with the lower class of the Company's servants were much in the condition of slaves, being purchased of their Indian proprietors or relations, and not unfrequently resold amongst each other by their purchasers."—*Beaver*, p. 18.

"My earnest representations to the Company for an immediate attempt at the introduction of civilization and Christianity among one or more of the aboriginal tribes, were neither attended to nor acted upon. I also became acquainted with many facts of cruelty and murder committed upon the natives by persons in the Company's service, some of which I narrated by letter to the Deputy-governor of the Company at home, and to the Governor of the Company's foreign possessions, in the hope that a stop might be put to the recurrence of these horrible atrocities, but from both I incurred interference in matters which did not professionally concern me."—*Ibid.*

(This remarkable letter amply deserves perusal *in extenso*. It details several atrocious murders committed by servants of the Company, and the equally unjustifiable acts of that body in hanging Indian offenders without trial of any kind.)

## PROFITS of the TRADE, &amp;c.

"The employment we afford at those seasons to many of the Indians, whereby they are brought into frequent communication and intercourse with our officers and servants, tends towards their gradual civilization and improvement, and we find our own interests promoted by an equitable and liberal system of trade and management."—*Reports*, p. 16.

"The principal benefit the Company derive from the exclusive license of trade is, the peaceable occupation of their own proper territory, from which they draw nearly the whole of the profits of their trade, and for the protection of which they have a right to look to Government in common with the rest of Her Majesty's subjects, as the trade of the country embraced in the royal license is as yet of very little benefit to them, and affords greater advantages to the mother country in the employment of shipping, &c."—*Ibid.* p. 26.

"The prices paid to the natives for their furs are, in general, exceedingly small. Throughout the whole of the protected territories the value of goods bartered for furs is certainly under one-twentieth of the value of these furs in England. In one year the gross value of the furs traded by the Company amounted to 211,000*l.*, and the net profits for that year were declared at 119,000*l.*"—*Simpson's Life, &c.* p. 429.

"With respect to the furs of that country, to rob their lawful owner of them by taking possession of them, either with no payment, or a most inadequate one, is surely not a legitimate method of teaching him their proper use and value. Of articles bartered by the Company for peltry and other native produce, one-half may be classed as useless, one quarter as pernicious (ardent spirits), and the remainder as of doubtful utility."—*Beaver*, p. 20.

## Enclosure 3, in No. .6

Encl. 3, in No. 6.

THE Charter of the Hudson's Bay Company was lately, on behalf of the North West Company, laid before some of the most eminent lawyers in England, with some queries about the validity of that Charter, and the exclusive privileges claimed under it by the first-mentioned Company, and their sub-monopolist Lord Selkirk, to which the following was received in answer:

"The

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"The prerogative of the Crown to grant an exclusive trade was formerly very much agitated in the great case of the East India Company *versus* Sandys. The Court of King's Bench, in which Lord Jeffries then presided, held that such a grant was legal, and we are not aware that there has since been any decision expressly on this question in the Courts of law. Most of the charters for exclusive trade and exclusive privileges to companies or associations have, since the revolution, received such a degree of legislative sanction as perhaps to preclude the necessity of any judicial decision on it.

"Much more moderate opinions were entertained concerning the extent of the prerogative since the revolution, to which is to be attributed the frequent recourse after that period to legislative authority in such cases, and particularly in the very case of the Hudson's Bay Company; for, by the temporary Act of the 2d of William and Mary, 'for confirming to the Governor and Company trading to Hudson's Bay their Privileges and Trade,' the duration of that confirmation is expressly limited to seven years, and to the end of the next Session of Parliament, and no longer. Part of the preamble to that Act is in effect a legislative declaration of the insufficiency of that charter for the purposes professed in it without the authority of the Legislature; and which authority entirely ceased soon after the expiration of the seven years after that passed. Such rights, therefore, as the Hudson's Bay Company can derive from the Crown alone, under their extraordinary charter, as it is, must entirely rest upon, and stand or fall, by the common-law prerogative of the Crown. The right of the Crown merely to erect a company for trading by charter, and to make a grant of territory, in Charles the Second's reign, may not be disputable; but, on the other hand, there are various clauses in the Hudson's Bay Company's Charter, particularly those empowering the Company to impose fines and penalties, to seize or confiscate goods and ships, and seize or arrest the persons of interlopers, and compel them to give security in 1,000*l.*, &c. &c., which are altogether illegal, and were always so admitted; and we are clearly of opinion that the Company and their officers, agents or servants, could not justify any seizure of goods, or arrest or imprisonment of any persons of his Majesty's subjects. But we think that the Hudson's Bay Company, and their grantee Lord Selkirk, have extended their territorial claims much further than the charter will warrant, supposing it even free from all the objections to which we apprehend it is in other respects liable. The words of the grant, purusing the recital of the petition of the grantees, with a very trifling alteration, that cannot affect the construction of the instrument, are 'of the sole trade and commerce of all those seas, straits, bays, rivers, lakes, creeks and sounds, in whatever latitude they shall be, within the entrance of the straits commonly called Hudson's Straits; together with all the lands and territories upon the (countries) coasts and confines of the seas, bays, lakes, rivers, creeks and sounds aforesaid; that is within the straits; and those limits are frequently referred to throughout the charter as the "limits aforesaid."

"Within the straits, must mean such a proximity to the straits as would give the lands spoken of a sort of affinity or relation to Hudson's Straits, and not to lands commencing at the distance of 900 miles, and extending 2,000 miles therefrom; that is to say, of the coasts and confines of the seas, &c., within the straits; such a boundary must be implied as is consistent with that view, and with the professed objects of a trading company intending not to found kingdoms and establish states, but to carry on fisheries in those waters, and to traffic for the requisition of furs and peltries and other articles mentioned in the charter. The enormous extension of land and territory now claimed, appears, therefore, to us, not to be warranted by any sound construction of the charter.

"Indeed, there is sufficient reason to suppose that the territories in question, or part of them, had been visited, traded in, and in a certain degree occupied by the French traders from Canada, and their Beaver Company, erected in 1630, whose trade in peltries were considerably prior to the date of the charter of the Hudson's Bay Company. These territories, therefore, would be excepted out of the grant, and the right of British subjects in general to visit and trade in these regions, would follow the national rights acquired by the king by the conquest and cession of Canada, as enjoyed by the French Canadians previous to that conquest and cession.

"No territorial right can therefore be claimed in the districts in question, and the exclusive trade there cannot be set up by virtue of the charter; these districts being remote from any geographical relation to Hudson's Bay or the Straits, and not being in any sense within the Straits, nor approached by the traders from Canada, through the interdicted regions, of course no violence to or interruption of trade from Canada could be justified under the territorial claims.

"If, contrary to our opinion, the land and territory in question were within the grant, the grant of so large a portion of territory as that to Lord Selkirk, of 116,493 square miles, would be an abuse of the charter, which might justify the interference of the Crown, because, though the Company might have a right to make grants of lands, such grants must be for the promotion of or consistent with the object of the institution; but the grant to Lord Selkirk leads to an establishment independent of the Company, inconsistent with the purposes of their institution, and in its effects created a sub-monopoly in one person to the detriment both of the Company and the public. The Company could confer no power to Lord Selkirk to appoint governors, courts of justice, or to exercise any independent authority, nor could they directly or indirectly transfer their authority to him.

"There seems no reason to doubt, that offences actually committed in the territories and district in dispute, where no court of judicature ever has been established, can in point of fact be tried by the courts of Canada, under the 43 Geo. 3, c. 138, and jurisdiction legally be tried by the courts of Canada, under the 43 Geo. 3, c. 138, and indeed,

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indeed, unless this district was within the provisions of that Act, we cannot discover what territory was meant to be included in it.

" Supposing the charter of the Hudson's Bay Company valid, and the districts in dispute to be within their limits, we should doubt whether the Governor and Company have lawful power by the charter to establish courts for the trial by the laws of England, of offences committed therein; that power, the Company has never yet attempted to exercise, though near 150 years has elapsed since they procured their charter; but even if they should still possess this extraordinary power, without further authority, legislative or regal, we should, nevertheless, think, that no courts there established could have authority to try and punish as an offence, the act of going there simply, which if the grant were legal, could amount, at the most, only to a misdemeanor or contempt of the King's lawful authority, to be prosecuted by the suit of his Majesty.

(signed) " A. Piggott.  
" R. Spankie.  
" H. Brougham."

" London, January 1816."

A separate opinion of another lawyer in London of pre-eminent abilities, was also had in January last, which substantially coincides with the above; and more pointed law opinions, some years ago, were given by Messrs. Bearcroft and Gibbs, also eminent in their profession, against the validity of the Hudson's Bay Company's pretensions to an exclusive right of trade.

Montreal, May 1816.

— No. 7.—

No. 7.  
B. Hawes, Esq.,  
to Sir J. H. Pelly,  
Bart.,  
18 March 1847.

*5 March 1847, p. 11.*

COPY of a LETTER from *B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.*, to *Sir J. H. Pelly, Bart.*

Downing-street, 18 March 1847.

Sir,  
With reference to my letter of the 5th instant, I am directed by Earl Grey to transmit to you the copy of a further communication which has been received from Mr. Isbister, respecting the condition of the native inhabitants of the territory in North America, which is under the jurisdiction of the Hudson's Bay Company; and I am to request that you would furnish Lord Grey with a full report upon the allegations preferred in this communication against the conduct of the Company towards the tribes in question.

I have, &c.  
(signed) *B. Hawes.*

— No. 8.—

COPY of a LETTER from *Sir J. H. Pelly, Bart.*, to *Earl Grey.*

No. 8.  
Sir J. H. Pelly,  
Bart., to  
Earl Grey.  
24 April 1847.

My Lord, Hudson's Bay House, 24 April 1847.  
I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of a letter from Mr. Under-Secretary Hawes, date the 5th March, accompanying a memorial, signed by certain persons calling themselves deputies from the natives of Rupert's Land, in which numerous complaints are advanced of the conduct of the Hudson's Bay Company towards the native inhabitants of that place.

In compliance with your Lordship's desire that I should make a report on this memorial, I beg leave to submit to your consideration the observations contained in the paper transmitted herewith, and at the same time to state some circumstances, of which your Lordship may not be aware, tending to throw light on the origin of the petition referred to in the memorial.

Some of the settlers at Red River have of late been carrying on a clandestine trade in furs, in violation of the Hudson's Bay Company's chartered rights, and of the covenants under which they hold their lands. The agents whom they employ in this traffic, and who range the surrounding country in all directions, are the half-breeds of the settlement, chiefly those of Canadian origin, who are more easily induced to adopt this mode of life than those of British extraction.

The injury thus done to the Company's trade, though considerable, is but one, and that the least of the evils resulting from this practice. The persons engaged in it are diverted from the cultivation of the soil, acquire habits which render them averse to the sober pursuits of industry, and exert a baneful influence on the other settlers of mixed race.

The

## THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 21

The Company, seeing the effects resulting from this traffic, which, if continued, would have frustrated the very object for which the settlement at Red River was formed, felt it their duty to take measures for putting a stop to it, and those measures, in proportion as they have proved effectual, have given dissatisfaction to the parties who derived profit from the practice.

The efforts of those parties have consequently been directed against the Company's charter, which they imagine may be got rid of through the instrumentality of the half-breeds, the more turbulent portion of whom they found little difficulty in enlisting in their cause. Hence the complaints of the Company's administration, the long array of alleged grievances, and the parade of an affected commiseration of the hard lot of the Indian population, whom no greater calamity could befall than to have the Red River half-breeds let loose upon them.

As the memorialists deal largely in vague and general assertions which do not admit of specific answers, I have, for the sake of clearness, divided the memorial into numbered paragraphs, to which corresponding numbers in the report are intended to refer, and have thrown into an Appendix some extracts, bearing on the Report, from the work of Thomas Simpson, the Arctic traveller, and from a book published by the Church Missionary Society, containing a narrative by the Bishop of Montreal, of a visit which that prelate made to Red River settlement two years ago.

I have, in like manner, divided into numbered paragraphs, the extracts from publications by the Rev. Mr. Beaver and Mr. Alexander Simpson, contained in the tabular statement accompanying the letter of Mr. A. K. Isbister, dated March 5; in juxtaposition with which will be found extracts corroborating the statements sought to be impugned by that gentleman.

These latter extracts are taken from the official narrative of Commodore Wilkes, commander of the United States' Exploring Expedition, who visited all the Company's posts (with the exception of two) westward of the Rocky Mountains, and who will not be suspected of any partiality in favour of the Hudson's Bay Company; also from the work of the Rev. Mr. Parker, an American missionary, who resided for some time at Fort Vancouver; from the history of the Oregon territory, by Mr. Dunn, formerly of the Hudson's Bay Company's service; and lastly, from the letters of Mr. Beaver himself to the Directors of the Company.

The perusal of the above-mentioned documents will, I trust, satisfy your Lordship that the allegations of the memorialists are groundless; but should any of the points brought under review appear to require further explanation, I shall be happy to afford it.

I have, &c.

(signed) J. H. Pelly.

Enclosure in No. 8.

MEMORIAL of A. K. Isbister and others,  
to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

REPORT on the MEMORIAL,  
&c. &c. &c.

Encl. in No. 8.

1. THAT your memorialists are natives of Rupert's Land, North America, entrusted with the duty of presenting the accompanying petition from their fellow countrymen, the Indians and half-breeds residing in and near the colony of the Red River, praying for the redress of certain grievances.

That from the harsh administration of the Hudson's Bay Company, discontent and misery prevail amongst the natives of Rupert's Land to an unparalleled extent, and your memorialists are most anxious that Her Majesty's Government should, as early as possible, inquire into the condition of the unfortunate people who are compelled to appeal to their Sovereign for protection against the ruinous effects and consequences of the monopoly which the Hudson's Bay Company have so long enjoyed under a charter that, according to some of the highest legal

1. It is proper to observe in the outset, that there is an ambiguity calculated to mislead in the term "natives," as used in this memorial, which is sometimes employed to denote half-breeds, or persons of mixed race, and sometimes the Indians or aboriginal inhabitants; in the Report it is applied exclusively to the latter.

That discontent and misery prevail to an unparalleled extent among the natives of Rupert's Land, is an assertion wholly destitute of truth. The natives have never in any part of that extensive territory manifested symptoms of discontent; on the contrary, they entertain the most cordial feelings towards the Company, whom they regard as their benefactors, and without whose assistance they know that they would be deprived not only of many comforts which they now enjoy, but of the means of sustaining life. (a) Appendix, No. 3, Some 5, 12, 13, 14, 16, 17.

## Memorial—continued.

legal authorities, has long since lost its force. Your memorialists trusting that a wise and paternal Government, distinguished by its attachment to a liberal policy, and the principles of commercial freedom, will not suffer to pass unheeded the prayers of an oppressed and injured race, proceed to lay before your Lordship the grievances which gave rise to the accompanying petition, and humbly solicit your earnest attention to the same.

(b) Appendix,  
Nos. 1 & 25.

(c) See No. 20 (c.)

(d) Appendix, No. 8.

## Report—continued.

Some of the half-breeds of Red River Settlement are discontented with the measures which the Company have found it necessary to adopt for the purpose of protecting their own interests, and also those of the colony. But their discontent is groundless, as with even moderate industry, they have within their reach more of the comforts of life than are enjoyed by persons of their station in almost any part of the world (b).

This is not the place to discuss the merits of the Company's charter, the validity of which is unquestionable, and as to their exclusive privilege of trade (improperly called a monopoly), it has been sufficiently proved by dear-bought experience, that without such privilege the natives would be exposed to great moral degradation and physical suffering.

2. This unfortunately is far from being a true statement of the Company's revenue; the revenue which they derive from the trade enables them to divide 40,000*l.* per annum on a capital of 400,000*l.* (c) with an occasional bonus, which together do not exceed the ordinary rate of mercantile profit.

3. Both these statements are untrue. There is no allusion in the Company's charter to the introduction of Christianity among the Indians, or to their moral and religious improvement. Its sole objects were trade, and the discovery of a North-west passage. But though the Company's charter does not oblige them to provide for those objects, they have not neglected them, and the provision so made occasions them a very considerable annual expense.

4. The Company entertain no such absurd views as those here attributed to them. They consider their own interests inseparably connected with those of the natives (d), and it is their anxious desire that the inhabitants of their territories should enjoy the blessings of fixed habitations, and a settled mode of life, without which little progress in civilization can be expected. It would be of great advantage to the Company if the natives could be induced to cultivate the ground, and to depend upon that resource for their subsistence, because they would thus be enabled to pursue the chase with much more effect during the winter, the season of hunting. But though several attempts have been made to break them into the employments of agriculture in the parts of the territory most suitable to that purpose, those experiments have not been so successful as could have been wished; nor will this result surprise those who know how difficult it is to overcome the instinctive repugnance of the North American Indians to any employment requiring the application of steady and persevering industry.

The distinction which the memorialists draw between what the Company do themselves,

2. They complain in the first instance that by the practice of exclusive trading with the natives, which the Hudson's Bay Company assert is secured to them by a Royal charter, that Company has for nearly the last 200 years, to the utter impoverishment, if not the ruin of the natives, amassed a princely revenue, which, as your memorialists believe, now amounts to nearly a quarter of a million sterling per annum.

3. Though one of the leading objects contemplated by the incorporation of the Company was the introduction of Christianity among the Indians, and the securing a due provision for their moral and religious improvement, little or none of the vast sums the Company has been permitted to accumulate, has been devoted to such purposes.

4. That, on the contrary, with a view of keeping the natives in a state of utter dependence, and perpetuating the wandering and precarious life of the hunter, on which they erroneously consider the existence of the fur trade to depend, they have permitted generation after generation of the helpless race consigned to their care to pass their lives in the darkest heathenism. There is not at present, nor, as your memorialists confidently believe, has there been a single Indian school, church or other establishment for religious and general instruction established by the Company throughout the whole of their extensive territories. What little has been done for the religious and moral improvement of the natives, is wholly due to the persevering exertions of the Church Missionary Society, and since the year 1839, of the Wesleyan Society of London. The Church Missionary Society receives no assistance whatever from the Company, and owing to the heavy expenses attending the establishment of Indian missions, its operations are necessarily very circumscribed. What assistance the Wesleyan missionaries receive from the Company, if indeed they receive any, your memorialists are not prepared to say.

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Memorial—continued.

Report—continued.

selves, and what they do through others, though verbally correct, conveys a substantial misrepresentation. In instructing the natives, and in conducting their own business, the Company adopt one uniform rule, namely, that of employing the instruments fittest for their purpose; and, on this principle they have employed the agency of the Church Missionary Society (e), and Wesleyan Missionary Society for the conversion of the natives, and of a Roman Catholic Missionary Society for the religious instruction of that portion of the mixed race who, being of French descent, have been brought up in the faith of the Church of Rome.

(e) Appendix,  
Nos. 1, 2, 26.

From near the Rocky Mountains in the west to Rupert's River in the east, wherever the peculiar circumstances of the country would permit, and there appeared a fair prospect that missionary labours would be attended with success (f), there at some central point from which various parts of the surrounding district could be visited, a missionary has been placed, and, where practicable, a school established and a chapel erected. Those establishments are necessarily few, because as each of them must be considered the nucleus of a future village or settlement, no locality can properly be selected for such a purpose that does not possess resources available for the progressive enlargement of the establishment, and, unfortunately, such localities are far from numerous in Rupert's Land. In the greater part of the territory the few natives whom it maintains are scattered in single families over an immense extent of surface, and the means of subsistence are so deficient, that to collect the inhabitants together in any numbers would be to expose them to certain death from starvation; the Company therefore feel it incumbent on them to take care that in attempting to remedy one evil they do not create another and a greater evil.

(f) Appendix,  
Nos. 1, 20, 21, 22,  
27, 28.

The Company bear willing testimony to the zeal and perseverance of the Church Missionary Society, but their services are not gratuitous, as stated in the memorial; all the societies that send missionaries to the Company's territories receive assistance from them; the Wesleyan missionaries are maintained and provided with the means of conveyance from place to place at the Company's expense.

The inhabitants of Red River settlement amount to somewhat more than 5,000; of these rather more than half profess the Roman Catholic religion, and are under the spiritual charge of a bishop assisted by several priests; there are four Roman Catholic schools, four Protestant churches and nine Protestant schools (g), attended by nearly 500 scholars, at one of which, it may be remarked, three of the memorialists were educated.

(g) Appendix,  
No. 28.

It is not correct to say that the Indians have been consigned to the care of the Company; they stand in no nearer relation to the Company than the aborigines of other colonies do to the British Government; and it may not perhaps be considered unreasonable to call upon the memorialists who are so ready to depreciate the efforts made by the Hudson's Bay Company, under every disadvantage, for the civilization of the natives of Rupert's Land, to show that greater efforts have been made for the same purpose in other colonies, even under the most favourable circumstances of soil, climate and native habits; were such a comparison instituted, the Company would have no reason to fear the result.

5. The other objects for which the charter was granted, namely, for improving the country by opening up its mineral and agricultural resources, and facilitating the means of internal navigation and transport, so as to fit it for a future colony, have been equally overlooked, with the like views of adding to the aggrandizement of the Company.

5. The charter, as has been already stated in No. 3, had no such objects as those here referred to; and if it had, some of them at least could not be effected by reason of the obstacles which nature has opposed to their accomplishment.

The spot best adapted to the purpose of agriculture in all the Company's territories is, where the settlement has been formed at the confluence of the Assiniboine and Red

Rivers (h), and that is 700 miles from the nearest port, which is ice-bound nine months out of the twelve. The only medium of transport that the country ever can afford is that which is now in use, namely, the lakes and rivers with which it abounds.

(h) Appendix,  
Nos. 1 & 25.

How the neglect of such improvements should add to the aggrandizement of the Company does not readily appear. The Company are of opinion that if they were practicable they would tend greatly to their advantage.

6. That

6. To

Memorial—*continued.*Report—*continued.*

6. That the Company, after having entered into a solemn obligation with the British Government, to discontinue the supply of spirituous liquors to the Indians, and after having actually abolished the trade in ardent spirits in some districts, for obvious purposes, for the first few years before and after the renewal of their last licence, have again introduced the deadly and demoralizing poison; thus undoing the slight amount of good which the missionaries were beginning to effect, and interposing the greatest obstacle to their future success.

(i) Appendix,  
Nos. 7, 9.  
Report, No. 20 (b.)

might appeal to the fact, that by their influence, the settlers at the Wallamet, and the Russians at Sitka have been prevailed upon to adopt the same course (i).

At a few of the Company's posts near Red River, small quantities of spirits are occasionally given as presents to the natives who frequent those posts. The Company have been compelled to adopt this expedient in self-defence, there being no alternative but to surrender the trade in that quarter entirely to American interlopers and their confederates—the leaders of the half-breeds at Red River settlement, who barter spirits for furs in their clandestine dealings with the natives. This is an example of the effects of competition, and it may serve to convey an idea, though a very imperfect one, of what would result were the whole of the Company's territories equally accessible to adventurers of every description (k), having no stake in the country, and outbidding one another in the scramble for furs. Rum would become the universal medium of exchange with the natives, and the most liberal distributor would carry off the prize.

(k) Appendix,  
No. 2.

7. That owing to the numerous hunting excursions which the demands of the fur trade render necessary, and to the great slaughter of animals consequent thereon, the only present resources of the country have been gradually diminishing to such an extent, that the larger part of the native population can no longer find the means of supporting life from the produce of the chase, or the natural productions of the soil.

(l) Appendix,  
No. 7.

6. To the charge that the Company have resumed the trade in spirituous liquors with the Indians, and the insinuations which accompany it, the Company give the most indignant denial. The very terms in which the charge is couched, afford a striking instance of that recklessness of assertion which pervades the memorial. The Company never entered into any obligation with the British Government to discontinue trading in ardent spirits with the natives of Rupert's Land, previously to their obtaining a renewal of their licence, the obligation of which extends only to the country situated to the north and west of their own territories: nevertheless, they have abolished the trade over both regions; and, if any thing were needed to prove their sincerity in this matter, they

7. If the present resources of the country are diminishing, it is not by the demands of the fur trade, but by the wanton destruction of animal life, which, great as it is, would be still greater were it not checked by the influence of the Company's officers and servants; and were it true that the larger portion of the native population can no longer find subsistence, their numbers would diminish; whereas, according to the best information that can be obtained, they are said to be increasing (m).

(n) Appendix,  
No. 12.

8. In the more northern parts of the country, from which all missionaries are rigorously excluded, and where the richest furs are obtained, but where the animals which supply the food of man have almost become extinct, as well as in many other districts, the Indians are exposed to the most frightful destitution. Numbers of them die yearly of famine, whilst others, in the extremity of want and despair, are tempted to commit the most revolting crimes to preserve a wretched existence. It is impossible for your Lordship's memorialists adequately to describe the sufferings of the natives who inhabit these portions of the country, arising from the exorbitant prices demanded by the traders for the wretched and almost valueless articles given, in a mockery of exchange, for the richest and most valuable furs.

8. The Missionaries are not excluded from the more northern parts of the country by the Company, who have no power to prevent their going thither, but by the obvious impossibility of their doing any good if they went.

That some of the natives of those parts are occasionally reduced to great distress, is too true, but this is not so much owing to the scarcity of the means of subsistence, as to the want of foresight and to habits of indolence (n); the active hunter being always able to maintain himself. Were it not for the relief afforded by the Company's servants, this distress would be greatly aggravated. Whenever the Company's posts are situated in the poorer parts of the country, provisions are sent thither from districts where there is abundance. The means of subsistence, instead of being exhausted, are thus equalized, and the distribution of the stores so collected often saves the Indians from those extremes of famine which the Memorialists so charitably

# THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

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Memorial—continued.

Report—continued.

charitably impute to the presence of the fur, (o) Appendix,  
trader (o).  
No. 3, 6, 8, 13, 14,  
16 & 17.

The goods supplied to the Indians, instead  
of being worthless, as the memorialists re-  
present them, are almost entirely articles of  
the first necessity; and the very moderate  
profit realized by the Company, is a proof  
that the prices are not exorbitant (p).

(p) Report,  
No. 20(c.)

9. Without tents of any kind to protect  
them from the severity of an Arctic climate;  
unable from their migratory pursuits to  
abide in permanent habitations; half naked,  
owing to the exorbitant prices demanded for  
the clothes furnished by the Company, whilst  
they are at the same time restricted from ex-  
changing the produce of their toil with any  
other parties; kept constantly in the Com-  
pany's debt, which they spend their whole  
lives in an ineffectual effort to clear off; ex-  
posed yearly to all the horrors of famine and the  
attendant crimes of murder and cannibalism,  
the wretchedness of the people's condition  
can scarcely admit of addition. The scarcity  
which prevails in the northern districts  
is gradually, but surely, extending to the  
south, and unless the Government of this  
country interpose its paternal interference to  
wean the Indians from their present wander-  
ing habits, and endeavour to turn their  
attention to agricultural pursuits, the whole  
of the northern tribes must, at no distant  
period, when the resources of the chase shall  
have failed them, be subjected to all the  
horrors of a wide-spread famine, from which  
they never can emerge.

9. Migratory pursuits are the essential  
condition of Indian life in the northern re-  
gions, which, if inhabited at all, must be in-  
habited by hunters and fishers, leading a pre-  
carious life, as, owing to the rigour of the  
climate, no subsistence can be obtained from  
the soil to the north of the 54th parallel of  
latitude. It would no doubt be desirable to  
wean the natives of such a climate from their  
wandering habits, and transplant them to a  
more genial region; but has it ever occurred to  
the memorialists to ask themselves the ques-  
tion, "How this is to be accomplished?" (q)

(q) Appendix,  
No. 12.

Many of the natives, however, have good  
leather tents, and all might probably have  
them if they were industrious (r). If they  
go half naked, it certainly is not owing to the  
exorbitant prices demanded for the clothes  
furnished by the Company; and even if they  
should get some things cheaper than they  
now do, were the fur trade thrown open  
(which is not admitted), that would afford  
but a poor compensation for the evils which  
competition would assuredly bring in its  
train, and of which the records of the Colo-  
nial Office contain abundant evidence (s).

(r) Appendix,  
No. 15.

It is very disadvantageous to the Company  
to supply them with goods on credit, but it  
is the unavoidable consequence of an impro-  
vidence inherent in the Indian nature. It  
has been found impossible to alter the system  
without subjecting the natives to great suf-  
fering, indeed in many cases to almost cer-  
tain death. The attempt has been repeatedly  
made by cancelling their debts (t), and pay-  
ing them in the spring for the produce of  
their winter hunts; but it has always been  
found that, in the fall of the year, they must  
either be supplied with a fresh outfit, or be  
left without the means either of protecting  
themselves from the inclemency of the cli-  
mate, or providing food during the winter.

(t) Appendix,  
No. 7.

The attack upon the Company's officers  
is equally unjust and malignant; there is no  
class of men who have more frequent calls  
upon their benevolence, or who answer such  
calls more readily (u). In point of mental and  
moral cultivation they are, at least equal to  
those of their own rank in this country; and  
to say that their deity is gold, to obtain which  
they trample down Christianity and benevo-  
lence, is as gross a calumny as ever was  
uttered (x).

(u) Appendix,  
No. 3, 5, 12, 13,  
14, 16, 17.

10. That feeling the utter inadequacy of  
the remuneration for their furs from the  
Company, many of the more enterprising of  
the natives have formed a resolution to ex-  
port their own produce, and import their  
own supplies, independently of the Company.  
They argue that, even supposing the charter  
to be still valid, and that it vests in the Com-  
pany

10. The enterprising natives here alluded  
to, are settlers at Red River, of mixed race;  
and the Company, who are their best cus-  
tomers, afford them every possible assistance  
in exporting their produce, and importing  
their supplies under proper regulations (y).

(y) Appendix,  
No. 1, 25.

But furs, which are no part of their produce,  
must be excepted. Such furs as they hunt  
themselves

## CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO COMPLAINTS OF

Memorial—continued.

Report—continued.

pany an exclusive right of trade to Hudson's Bay against all other traders from Britain, none of its provisions are, or can be binding on the natives to trade with the Company exclusively, or can prevent them from carrying their furs or other property out of the country to the best market.

(x) See Copy of Land Deed.

11. When this course has been adopted, however, the Company's agents have seized the furs of such parties as refused to sell them at the prices fixed by the Company, and in some instances have imprisoned the recusant natives. Against such gross aggressions on the rights and liberties of the natives, your memorialists most vehemently protest. Being unable to obtain redress from the local courts of the country, your memorialists feel entitled to claim the protection of the British Government, and humbly entreat your Lordship to take the case into your kind consideration.

12. It is likewise the painful duty of your Lordship's memorialists to advert to the precarious state of the public peace among the native population, particularly in and about the colony of the Red River. The majority of the Indians and half-breeds in that district depend mainly on the yearly buffalo hunts. The colony itself, verging on the boundary line of the United States, the whole of the hunting-grounds are within the American territories. From these grounds the American Government has warned off the hunters of the Red River in favour of the natives of the plains, who are under its protection, and for this purpose detachments of American troops are stationed throughout the plains to warn off all persons intruding from the British side; but at the same time, proffering them the alternative of becoming American citizens. The Hudson's Bay Company, on the other hand, claim whatever is hunted on the British side of the line, distraining the goods and imprisoning the persons of those who refuse to accede to their prices. Owing to these conflicting claims, the natives, who are the original owners of the soil, have their energies and hopes completely paralyzed, and are doomed to starvation in a land which is their own, both by birth and by descent.

(b) Appendix,  
No. 1, 25.

(c) Appendix,  
No. 5, 18.

Report, No. 17, 20.

themselves are purchased by the Company, but trafficking with the Indians cannot be permitted. Their argument on this point is quite untenable. The circumstance of their being born in the country may entitle them to call themselves natives, but it neither conveys to them any privileges belonging or supposed to belong to the aboriginal inhabitants, nor does it divest them of the character of British subjects, all of whom are precluded by the Company's charter from trafficking in furs within its limits without a license from the Company, and the Red River settlers are additionally bound, by the covenants under which they hold their lands, to abstain from such traffic (x).

11. Considerable quantities of furs procured in the Company's territories by illicit traffic, are annually conveyed in a clandestine manner to the United States. In one instance, the offending party was detected and the furs seized, but instead of their being forfeited, as they might lawfully have been, a fair price was paid for them by the agents of the Company; but there is no instance on record of any person having been imprisoned for such an offence, nor are the Company aware that any application for redress in such cases has ever been made to the local Courts.

12. The Company entertain no fears for the preservation of the public peace at Red River Settlement. The settlers have bound themselves to maintain it, and there is every reason to believe that the great majority of them will fulfil their obligations (a). Should any act otherwise, they must take the consequences.

If the Red River hunters trespass on American ground, the American Government may lawfully warn them off, and prevent them from so doing. That, however, ought not to be considered as a misfortune; for if they understood their true interest they would abandon the chase, and apply themselves solely to agriculture, which would abundantly supply them with the means of living comfortably (b). They would thus lead a life of less excitement, and their energies and hopes would be directed to more civilizing pursuits.

From the manner in which the memorialists express themselves, it might be supposed that the Company lay claim to the proceeds of the buffalo hunts. No supposition, however, could be more erroneous; and as to the charge of distraining and imprisonment, that has been already disposed of, as far as furs are concerned, as has also the claim of the half-breeds to be considered the original owners of the soil. With respect to buffalo hunting, there has never been any restriction whatever.

13. When the memorialists say that the ignorance and barbarism, the crimes and sufferings of the natives are ascribable to the Hudson's Bay Company (c), they make one of those extravagant assertions that carry with them their own refutation. Nothing is more obviously the interest of the Company (supposing them to be swayed by no

13. Deeply convinced that the present appalling condition of the native population, their ignorance, their barbarism, and the sufferings and crimes consequent thereon, are ascribable to the present system of misgovernment, and also being fully satisfied that the existing evils would be remedied, and the still more fearful one now pending averted,

# THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

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*Memorial—continued.*

*Report—continued.*

averted, by the adoption of a system founded upon more humane and enlightened views; your memorialists most earnestly desire to impress upon your Lordship the solemn and sacred duty of inquiring into the condition of this deeply suffering people, the last remnant of a noble race, before inquiry and remedy prove too late. Hitherto no efforts have been made in their behalf by the Government of this country; to which alone they can properly look for protection and justice. The occasional reports which have from time to time been forwarded to the Government of this country, at least such as have been made public, are destitute of truth, and were evidently framed with a view to mislead the colonial authorities, and avert further inquiry. To show this, we need only request your Lordship's attention to the report of Sir George Simpson,\* and beg of you to contrast them with a work published in 1845, intituled, "The Life and Travels of Thomas Simpson, by his brother Alexander." Though both brothers participated in the profits of the monopoly, and must therefore be presumed to be less than impartial witnesses, your Lordship will find that the book (published by Bentley, New Burlington-street,) strongly sustains and corroborates the statements which we have the honour of laying before you.

no higher considerations) than to prevent crime and sufferings, and to promote peace among the natives. This is the course which their servants are uniformly directed to pursue, and which has produced the happiest results (d).

The attempt made to invalidate the testimony of Sir George Simpson will not answer the purpose of the memorialists, nor is the evidence of Mr. Alexander Simpson admissible in this case. That gentleman, at the time when the book referred to was published, was smarting under the rejection of an exorbitant and groundless claim, and stood towards the Company in the relation of a discontented servant. The animus of his publication may be gathered from the facts that he suppressed the most material parts of his correspondence with the Company (e), and excluded from the quotations which he made from Mr. Thomas Simpson's work every sentence that spoke favourably of the Company. To Mr. Thomas Simpson's work (which, it may be remarked, had been published previously under the superintendence of Mr. Alexander Simpson), the Company willingly appeal; and some extracts from that work are subjoined to this paper, which so far from corroborating the statements of the memorialists, show them to be without foundation. No man in the Company's service had such opportunities as he enjoyed of becoming acquainted with their management, and none was better able to appreciate its effects.

(d) Appendix,  
No. 2, 6, 10.

(e) Appendix,  
No. 1.

14. The spirit and tendencies of the Hudson's Bay Company are, for reasons that will readily appear, opposed to the spread of information among the native population, and unfortunately they possess but too many facilities for carrying into effect the shortsighted and pernicious policy by which they have been uniformly guided in their intercourse with the natives. They are without direct or positive accountability to the Legislature of this country, and as regards their operations in the distant region over which they exercise jurisdiction, are practically beyond the reach of public opinion. Their sole aim is avowedly to draw the greatest possible revenue from the country, to attain which the considerations of humanity and religion are overlooked, while, as your Lordship will perceive by the statements now submitted, the lives of the unoffending native race, who for no fault of their own, and for no reason that can be given, are deprived of their inheritance and their natural rights; and thus of the power of helping themselves, are being virtually sacrificed year by year to the same selfish and iniquitous object. What must be the ultimate fate of this unhappy people under such a system, it is as easy to foresee as it is painful to contemplate.

15. Your memorialists feel assured, that upon a due consideration of the statements now brought forward, supported as they are by a weight of testimony which places their accuracy

14. The Company consider the opinions expressed in this paragraph to be as erroneous as the statements on which they profess to be founded have been found to be. They are of opinion that the policy which they pursue is wise and salutary, and of that policy it is an essential feature that their intercourse with the natives should be marked by a regard to their welfare, from which their own interests are inseparable (f). It is not true that their sole aim is avowedly to draw the greatest possible revenue from the country; their views are directed, not to temporary but to permanent objects, and with those views the course which they are represented as pursuing towards the native race would be completely incompatible (g).

(f) Appendix,  
No. 8.

(g) Report, No. 16,  
17, 19, 20, and Ap-  
pendix, *passim*.

15. What the testimony here alluded to may be, does not appear, as none has yet been adduced, but whatever or wherever it may be, if it place the accuracy of the state-  
ments

\* See the Papers relative to the Hudson's Bay Company, printed by order of The House of Commons, August 1842.

Memorial—*continued.*

accuracy beyond dispute, your Lordship will extend to them that humane and considerate attention to which their great and urgent importance entitle them. What further corroboration may be deemed necessary in support of the above allegations, your memorialists are ready to supply, as well as to suggest such remedies as are calculated to remove the evils complained of; such remedies as a people both willing and able to help themselves, but deprived of the power, alone require to restore to them the blessings of peace and prosperity, and render them happy, contented and grateful subjects.

It remains to notice a letter of Mr. A. K. Isbister, one of the memorialists, dated March 5, and the documents accompanying it, which were transmitted, with Mr. Under-Secretary Hawes's letter of 18th March, \* from the Colonial Office.

\* *Vide p. 20.*

It is the professed object of the writer of the letter to contrast certain statements respecting the Hudson's Bay Company, made by Sir J. H. Pelly and Sir George Simpson, with the statements of two other persons, with the view of showing that the former are altogether unworthy of credit.

The authorities brought forward for this purpose, are Mr. Alexander Simpson and the Rev. Herbert Beaver, chaplain at Fort Vancouver about 10 years ago.

As regards the value of Mr. Simpson's testimony, it is unnecessary to add anything to what has been stated under No. 13.

Mr. Beaver labours under a similar disability as a witness in this case. That gentleman was sent to Fort Vancouver to act as chaplain at the establishment there, and to itinerate as a missionary among the neighbouring tribes of Indians; but it was soon discovered that an unfortunate selection had been made. Instead of practising that self-denial which must ever be the distinguishing characteristic of a properly qualified missionary, Mr. Beaver could not put up with any curtailment of the comforts and conveniences which he had been accustomed to enjoy in England; the consequence was, that he soon became dissatisfied with everything and everybody. Before he had been two months at Fort Vancouver, he quarrelled with the chief superintendent of the establishment, and after two years of contention, quitted his post and returned to England, leaving the objects for which he had been appointed, in a great measure, unaccomplished. The Directors were then obliged to dispense with his further services, and he parted with the Company a disappointed and discontented man.

After his return to this country, he published, in a periodical work, some statements in which a spirit of resentment is much more conspicuous than a regard to truth. The same remark applies, in a still stronger degree, to the statements contained in his letter to the Aborigines Society, of the existence of which the Company were not aware until it was transmitted from the Colonial Office. With a recklessness unjustifiable in any man, much more in a clergyman, he has not scrupled, in his eagerness to throw obloquy on the servants of the Company, to attribute to them, on mere hearsay, crimes of which a little inquiry, had it suited his purpose to inquire, would have shown them to be innocent, while all that he describes is so disfigured by exaggerations or omissions, that it is difficult to recognize the transactions to which allusion is made.

For example, the acts described (at page 13) as atrocious murders, were merely acts done in self-defence by a party of the Company's servants, who were wantonly attacked by the natives. That such was the real character of these acts, Mr. Beaver appears to have had some suspicion, from his having entered a caveat against the plea of self-defence being used to justify the killing of a native.

The hanging, shooting and burning so circumstantially described in the concluding paragraph of the letter alluded to, which Mr. Beaver states, from good authority, took place in August 1840, when stripped of exaggeration, amounts to this, that an Indian who had murdered one of the Company's servants while asleep, and afterwards robbed him, was given up by his chief, brought to trial, found guilty, and hanged, after confessing the crime.

With this transaction Mr. Beaver has mixed up another which took place in the year 1828, and which, having been mentioned by him before at page 14, is thus made to figure as two distinct acts. An officer and four men having been treacherously murdered, when asleep, by some natives belonging to a sanguinary tribe on the coast, and a woman carried off, the officer in charge at Fort Vancouver sent a party to demand the delivering up of the murderers and the restoration of the woman, which, being refused, recourse was had to force, and in the encounter which ensued, some of the natives lost their lives, and their huts were set on fire. The example was necessary. Had such a crime been suffered to pass with impunity, the life of no white man would have been safe; but the Company are not aware that, except in one instance (mentioned at page 221 of Thomas Simpson's narrative) the life of an Indian has ever been taken by any of the persons in their employment, unless in self-defence or in punishment for the crime of murder.

Report—*continued.*

ments beyond dispute, further corroboration would seem to be unnecessary.

The people who are described as being able, but not having the power to help themselves, are the Red River half-breeds, whose peace and prosperity, as far as the Company know, have never been interrupted. If they have any grievances to complain of, and remedies to propose, due consideration will be given to them.

With

## THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 29

With respect to the instances of corporal punishment mentioned (at page 15) it is impossible at this distance of time to say what foundation there may have been for Mr. Beaver's statement. That those statements are overcharged, will not appear improbable to those who have marked his habit of exaggeration, or who know the humane character of the gentleman who for so many years conducted the affairs of the Company at Fort Vancouver. The infliction of corporal punishment is strictly forbidden, except in extreme cases, and after mature deliberation. The following are the Company's instructions to their officers on this subject:

See ante, p. 15.

"When bad men are associated with good, it will be impossible to preserve necessary discipline without having recourse sometimes to corporal punishment; but such punishment should never be inflicted under the influence of passion or caprice; to produce any good effect, it should be administered with coolness, temper and moderation, and at the same time with as much solemnity as circumstances may admit. It is also proper that a record of all punishments, and of the offences which called for them, be in future entered in the journals of officers in charge of stations."

With the exception of the charge that the natives are held in slavery by the Company's servants (which will be noticed hereafter), the only other matter in Mr. Beaver's letter calling for observation in this place is the statement at the bottom of page 18. (13). Report, No. 18.

See ante, p. 13.

It is not true that the officers in charge either connived at or permitted, much less ordered, the perpetration of the act there mentioned; on the contrary, when it came to his knowledge, he greatly disapproved of it, and marked his disapprobation by reporting it to the Governor and Council of the Northern Department; but the person chiefly concerned in it died before any steps could be taken in the matter.

It is also to be observed, that Mr. Beaver has omitted all allusion to that which provoked, though it could not justify, the act in question, namely, the infamous practices of the wretches subjected to it, who, though frequently driven off, would persist in infesting, in female habiliments, the neighbourhood of the fort where the people were at work.

In order to give undue weight to the statement of Mr. Beaver, Mr. Isbister asserts in one place that "he was an eye-witness to the facts he relates," and in another, that he spoke "from personal knowledge." Now, a very superficial glance at Mr. Beaver's letter will be sufficient to show that almost everything that he relates is not the result of his personal knowledge, but of information received from others; and when it is considered that at such an establishment as that of Fort Vancouver, where it is necessary to keep up discipline among a great number of men, there cannot fail to be some discontented persons ready to supply any demand for grievances, it will not be difficult to estimate the real value of information so obtained.

The tariff which Mr. Isbister exhibits as that used by the Company in trading with the natives, is altogether fallacious; there is no such tariff in use anywhere throughout the territories under the Company's management; a great many of the articles therein enumerated are never given in barter, but are distributed as presents, and the Indians, when not able to purchase necessary articles, are provided with them gratis.

Report, No. 20 (c).

Appendix, No. 7.

Mr. Isbister does not think the Company can claim any merit for the peace and tranquillity which the Indian country has enjoyed since it fell under the exclusive management of the Company, inasmuch as such a state was the natural consequence of their undivided sway. The restoration of peace and tranquillity after the cessation of competition, was not so much a matter of course as he has chosen to represent it. The evils of the system of trading which had previously prevailed, did not cease with the competition, but were long felt in the demoralization which it had produced, and the feuds of which it had been the prolific source among the natives.

Among so many tribes of uncivilized men, the elements of disorder and strife must at all times exist in abundance, which a trifling accident may call into activity. To preserve peace, and to effect reconciliation when peace has been interrupted, are objects of importance, requiring the constant exercise of vigilance and prudence, and which can be accomplished only by the influence of a power having a permanent interest in the maintenance of order, to which the contending parties are accustomed to look up with respect and confidence.

Report No. 17 (a),  
20 (a) (d).

(In the arrangement of the following extracts, the method adopted in dealing with the Memorial has been pursued. Mr. A. K. Isbister's table of extracts, from publications by Mr. Beaver and Mr. Alexander Simpson, contrasted with the statements of Sir J. H. Pelly and Sir George Simpson, are placed on the left hand, and other extracts corroborating those statements, and disproving those of Messrs. Beaver and Simpson, on the right; and the numbers of the paragraphs follow those of the Memorial consecutively).

## STATEMENTS

## CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO COMPLAINTS OF

## STATEMENTS exhibiting the Policy of the Hudson's Bay Company towards the Natives.

EXTRACTS from the REPORTS of Sir J. H. Pelly and Sir G. Simpson, Governors of the Hudson's Bay Company, submitted to the British Government on applying for the renewal of the exclusive Licence of the Company in 1837.—Printed by order of the House of Commons, 8 August 1842.

"16. DURING the competition in trade previous to the year 1821 (when the exclusive management fell into the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company), it was found impossible to take any effectual means towards the civilization or moral and religious improvement of the native population. Since that period the Company have established two Protestant Missions, under the management of the chaplains at Red River settlement, where there are likewise two Catholic Missions and 13 schools.

"It is gratifying to be enabled to say, that the zealous endeavours of our missionaries have been most successful.

"The Hudson's Bay Company have likewise established missions and schools at several of their principal depots or posts on the Columbia River, west side of the Rocky Mountains, under the management of another of their chaplains." (Mr. Beaver, the only clergyman who ever entered that part of the Company's territories.)—*Report of Sir G. Simpson*, p. 16.

EXTRACTS from the LIFE of Thomas Simpson, by his Brother Alexander:—Bentley, New Burlington-street, 1845; and a LETTER of Reverend Herbert Beaver, relating to the Indians on the North-west Coast of America, to the Aborigines Protection Society (accompanying this).

"16. This extensive field for missionary enterprise was unoccupied until the year 1830, when the attention of the Wesleyan Conference of Canada was directed towards it."—*Simpson's Life and Travels*, p. 432.

"Although the Hudson's Bay Company owes its entire prosperity, nay its very existence to the commerce with the natives of the well-nigh unlimited territory over which it exercises a nearly uncontrolled sway, yet little has hitherto been done by the Company on the east side of the Rocky Mountains, and nothing on the west side, towards advancing in the scale of creation the innumerable tribes of untold rational and immortal beings whose most important destinies have for the last 170 years been placed in its hands."—*Beaver*, p. 16.

STATEMENTS corroborating the Assertions of Sir J. H. Pelly and Sir George Simpson, and disproving those of Messrs. Beaver and Simpson.

16. "THE Hudson's Bay Company, when they received a licence of exclusive trade from Her Majesty's Government, entered into no engagement to convert the heathen. That is the purpose for which missionary societies are established, and it is their peculiar province.

"All that the Company profess to do (and that is no unimportant service) is to prepare the way for the missionary, and to assist him as far as their means permit in the prosecution of his labours; and they flatter themselves they have not been altogether unsuccessful in the attainment of this object.

"Had the quotation from Mr. Alexander Simpson's publication been completed, it would have run thus:—

"This extensive field for missionary enterprise was unoccupied until the year 1830, when the attention of the Wesleyan Conference of Canada was directed by Sir George Simpson towards it. Since then, ten or twelve zealous missionaries of that persuasion have been scattered over the wide Indian country, a large field for the exercise of Christian zeal and self-devotion."

"There were at this time at Red River two Church of England missionaries, four Protestant churches, five Protestant day-schools, containing about 400 children, two seminaries, affording board, lodging and education to 25 young ladies and 30 young gentlemen,\* and at the Sunday-schools nearly 300 received religious instruction.† There was also a Roman Catholic Bishop and several priests, and four or five schools for the settlers of that persuasion."—See *Bishop of Montreal's Narrative*, pp. 218, 219.

"The Company's principal chaplain resides at their depot at Fort Vancouver, on the north side of the Columbia River, where agriculture, rearing of stock and other commercial operations are prosecuted on a great scale. The same enlightened body has of late years liberally assisted American missionaries, employed in instructing the dissolute maritime tribes, and in founding an American colony on the Willamette, a southern tributary of the Columbia; and has since conveyed across the mountains several Canadian priests, who, under the authority of the Bishop, at Red River, are gone to form another British settlement on the shores of Puget's Sound; the nucleus of a future empire in the far West. The case is widely different in the frozen regions of the North; there the Indian hunters are scattered through interminable forests, into which civilization can never penetrate. Since the coalition of the rival companies, however, and the discharge of the noxious swarm of adventurers who, encouraged by the license of a hot opposition, overran and well-nigh ruined the country, the precepts of morality and order have been instilled into the minds of the aborigines by many officers of the Company. No stronger proof of the salutary effect of their injunctions can be adduced than that while peace and decorum mark the general conduct of the northern tribes, bloodshed, rapine and unbridled lust are the characteristics of the fierce hordes of Assiniboinies, Pieyans, Blackfeet, Cereces, Fall and Blood Indians, who inhabit the plains between the Saskatchewan and Missouri, and are without the pale of the Company's influence and authority."—*Simpson's Narrative of Discoveries on the North Coast of America*, p. 18.

"On my arrival, I found a school consisting of about 60 scholars, one-third being girls of various ages, from five to fourteen years, which having been under different teachers for some time past, had lately been placed under the management of Mr. John Fisher Robinson; the first and second classes, amounting to 14, read well, write tolerably, and begin to cypher, but have received little religious education, the singing of hymns forming, as I understand, nearly the whole; the other classes are in different stages of progress.

"Through

\* This is the School for young gentlemen, at which three of the Memorialists, Messrs. Isbister and Mr. J. McLeod, were educated.  
† Appendix, No. 27.

# THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

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**STATEMENTS** exhibiting the Policy of the Hudson's Bay Company towards the Natives—*continued.*

**STATEMENTS** corroborating the Assertions of Sir J. H. Pelly—*continued.*

"Through your liberality, I have been enabled to supply all persons who want them with bibles, prayer-books and testaments, including the hospital, which I visit several times in the week, and the school with spelling-cards and other elementary books."—*Mr. Beaver's Letter to the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company*, 10 November 1836.

17. "The employment we afford at these seasons to many of the Indians, whereby they are brought into frequent communication and intercourse with our officers and servants, tends towards their gradual civilization and improvement; and we find our own interests promoted by an equitable and liberal system of trade and management."

"I have no hesitation in saying that the native population of the countries through which the Hudson's Bay Company's business extends, never derived any real benefit from their intercourse with the whites, until the fur trade, because exercised under the existing licence."

"In proof of this, the population of some of the tribes, previous to that time sensibly diminishing, is now increasing."

"On the banks of the Columbia River, we are directing our attention to agriculture on a large scale."

"I have also the satisfaction to say, that the native population are beginning to profit by our example, as many formerly dependent on hunting and fishing, now maintain themselves by the produce of the soil."—*Report of Sir G. Simpson.*

(c) "The gentlemen belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company deserve commendation for their gentle treatment of the Indians, by which they have obtained their friendship and confidence, and also for the efforts which some few of them have made to instruct those about them in the first principles of our holy religion, especially in regard to equity, humanity and morality."

"This Company is of long standing; they have originated a vast trade, which they are anxious to preserve; and therefore, they consult the prosperity of the Indians as intimately connected with their own. I have not been informed as yet of a single instance of any Indian being wantonly killed by the men belonging to this Company; nor have I heard any boasting among them of the satisfaction taken in killing or abusing Indians, too frequently observable elsewhere."—*Journey beyond the Rocky Mountains in 1835, 1836 and 1837, by the Rev. Samuel Parker, A.M.* p. 31. Chambers' Edition.

(d) "An opinion has gone abroad, I do not know how, that at this post there is a total disregard of morality and religion, and that vice predominates. As far as my observations went, I feel myself obliged to state, that everything seems to prove the contrary, and to bear testimony that the officers of the Company are exerting themselves to check vice, and encourage morality and religion, in a very marked manner, and that I saw no instance in which vice was tolerated in any degree. I have, indeed, reason to believe, from the discipline and the example of the superiors, that the whole establishment is a pattern of good order and correct deportment."

"This remark not only extends to this establishment, but, as far as our opportunities went (and all but two of their posts were visited), the same good order prevails throughout the country. Wherever the operations of the Company extend, they have opened the way to future emigration, provided the means necessary for the success of emigrants, and rendered its peaceful occupation an easy and cheap task."—*Commodore Wilkes' Narrative of the United States' Exploring Expedition*, Vol. 4, p. 232.

(e) "In addition to these, there are extensive kitchens and apartments for the half-breed and Indian children that the Company have taken to bring up and educate. Of these there are now 23 boys and 15 girls, who claim the particular attention of Dr. M'Loughlin and Mr. Douglas. A teacher is employed for the boys, who superintends them, not only in school, but in the field and garden."

"During my stay, an examination took place, and although the pupils did not prove very expert at their reading and writing, yet we had sufficient evidence that they had made some improvement, and were in a fair way to acquire the rudiments; some allowance was to be made for the boys, who had been constantly in the field under their teacher for a few months past. Dr. M'Loughlin estimated the labour of four of these small boys as equal to that of a man. It was an interesting sight to see these poor little cast-away fellows of all shades of colour, from the pure Indian to that of the white, thus snatched away from the vices and idleness of the savage. They

17. (a) "God knows that I speak the conviction of my mind, and may He forgive me if I speak unadvisedly when I state my belief, that the life of an Indian was never yet, by a trapper, put in competition with a beaver skin!"—*Beaver*, p. 19.

"An awful fatality seems to overhang the retiring members of the Company, a punishment for the unprincipled and licentious lives they have led."—*Simpson's Life and Travels*, p. 81.

"It is an observation never more truly exemplified than at the Company's settlements, that wherever the Gospel have been carried among modern heathen nations, there, simultaneously, has vice, before unknown, been imported."

"Assuredly the Indians saw no recommendation of religion in the example of the generality of the Company's servants, with whom its precepts seemed to be in almost total abeyance."—*Ibid.*

17. (a) "Thus, I am putting myself, without fear, into the hands of Indians; where, a few years ago, an escort of 50 men was necessary for safety, and shall have to pass places which have been battle-ground between traders and Indians."—*Journey beyond the Rocky Mountains in 1835, 1836 and 1837, by the Rev. Samuel Parker, A.M.* p. 31. Chambers' Edition.

(b) "The ferocity of the Blackfeet towards the white men, has, however, latterly been much mitigated by intercourse with the traders and out-trapping parties of the Company."

"These act towards them with uniform civility, liberality, and justice, and go openly, and with known authority, and also under responsibility to the Company; not in the sneaking, thieving, bullying and plundering character of the Americans, who can give little, and are disposed to give less, in the way of trade, but cheat and plunder as much as they can, and are not under any control."—*Mr. Townsend* (an American writer), speaking of a trapping party in the service of the Company, and under the command of Mr. M'Kay, consisting of 30 men, Indians, French Canadians and half-breeds, observes: 'I admire the order, decorum and strict subordination which exist amongst his men, so different from what I have been accustomed to see in parties composed of Americans; steady, determined perseverance and bold measures, aided by a rigid self-example, made them as clay in his hand, and has finally reduced them to their present admirable condition.'—*History of the Oregon Territory*, by John Dunn, p. 323.

## CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO COMPLAINTS OF

STATEMENTS exhibiting the Policy of the Hudson's Bay Company towards the Natives—*continued.*

STATEMENTS corroborating the Assertions of Sir J. H. Pelly—*continued.*

They all speak both English and French; they are also instructed in religious exercises, in which I thought they appeared more proficient than in their other studies. These they are instructed in on Sunday, on which day they attend Divine worship twice.

"They are a ruddy set of boys, and when at work had a busy appearance; they had planted and reared 600 bushels of potatoes; and from what Dr. M'Loughlin said to me, fully maintain themselves.

"The girls are equally well cared for, and are taught by a female, with whom they live and work."—*Commodore Wilkes' Narrative of the United States' Exploring Expedition*, Vol. 4.

18.

18. "One great cause of the immorality at the place where I was stationed, and a consequent barrier to the improvement and conversion of the Indians, was the holding of some of them in a state of slavery by persons of all classes in the Company's service, and by those who have retired from it, and become settlers on the rivers Willamette and Cowlitz, but over whom the Company retain authority. The women themselves, who were living with the lower class of the Company's servants, were much in the condition of slaves, being purchased of their Indian proprietors or relations, and not unfrequently sold amongst each other by their purchasers."—*Beaver*, p. 18.

18. Unfortunately for the interests of humanity, slavery exists to a great extent among the native tribes on the North-west Coast; but no servant of the Hudson's Bay Company ever was the owner of a slave. Connexions are sometimes formed between persons in the Company's service and native women who own slaves, but the slaves continue the property of those women; and it is presumed that whatever influence the men acquire over the owners, is used to mitigate the lot of the unhappy beings who are held in bondage. To prevent such connexions is impossible, but the Company have directed that they shall be discouraged by every practicable means, as will appear from the following extract from their letter to the officer in charge at Fort Vancouver, under date 15th November 1837:

"We were in hopes you would ere now have been successful in your endeavour to put an end to the inhuman and disgraceful traffic in slaves among the Indians frequenting the establishments. We are exceedingly anxious for the accomplishment of this object, and that the condition of that much oppressed and injured race, whose sufferings at times are shocking to humanity, should be ameliorated.

"We are aware that many of the native Indian women, the wives of our servants, still retain the slaves they brought with them from their respective tribes. We have to desire that your best endeavours be used to obtain the emancipation of those slaves.

"In cases where the Company, or the gentlemen in the service, have obtained the liberation of slaves by purchase, and that, after their emancipation, they remain in their employ, it is necessary and proper they should enter into a written contract of servitude, at fixed wages (the amount of wages to be, of course, regulated by the value of their services); and all such persons must not only be virtually released from slavery, but even the term 'slave' must stand on no consideration or account be applied to any inmate or resident at any of the Company's establishments."

19. "At the Red River and Columbia schools, Indian children are educated, belonging to many of the distant tribes. We are using our utmost endeavours in every other part of the country, where the climate and soil admit of it, to collect the Indians into villages and direct their attention to agriculture, as the first step towards civilization.  
—*Report of Sir G. Simpson.*

19. "My earnest representations to the Company, for an immediate attempt at the introduction of civilization and Christianity among one or more of the aboriginal tribes, were neither attended to nor acted on. I also became acquainted with many facts of the cruelty and murder committed upon the natives by persons in the Company's service, some of which I narrated by letter to the Deputy-governor of the Company at home, and to the Governor of the Company's foreign possessions, in the hope that a stop might be put to the recurrence of these horrible atrocities, but from both I incurred a rebuke for my undue interference in matters which did not professionally concern me."—*Beaver.*

This remarkable letter amply deserves perusal *in extenso*.

It details several atrocious murders committed by servants of the Company, and the equally unjustifiable acts of that body, in hanging Indian offenders without trial of any kind.

19. One of the objects for which Mr. Beaver was sent out, was to attempt to introduce civilization and Christianity among the tribes in the neighbourhood of Fort Vancouver; and had he complied with the instructions given him, that object would, to a certain extent, have been attained; but he took no pains to qualify himself for communicating with the natives in their own language.

It is a great misrepresentation to say that his representations were not attended to. Some of his suggestions were attended to, but he did not wait to see them adopted. In his last letter, dated 27th March 1837, he announces his intention of returning, though "before he can receive replies to his various representations."

He never received any rebuke for narrating "horrible atrocities," but regret was very gently expressed that his attention should have been so much occupied with frivolous complaints about his discontents, and matters which did not lie within his province.

"Relative to the instruction to be imparted to the neighbouring Indians, I can, of course, at present say but little; their numbers have been of late years much thinned by disease. Their tribes are numerous, much scattered, and speak different languages.

"There is, however, one language, the Chinook, which is partially understood by nearly the whole; but I much fear, were I even to become master of this language, which would be

# THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

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**STATEMENTS exhibiting the Policy of the Hudson's Bay Company towards the Natives—continued.**

**STATEMENTS corroborating the Assertions of Sir J. H. Pelly—continued.**

be no very difficult task, as far, at least, as foreigners usually understand it, that it is too defective for the conveyance of Christian ideas.

amongst them must be chiefly, if not wholly, confined to the children; but even these could not attend a school for the purpose of learning English, unless they were entirely maintained at our expense, the mode of life of the parents being too migratory and erratic to permit the constant attendance of a stationary clergyman.

"Notwithstanding these impediments, I shall not lose sight of your wishes on this subject.

"Contemplating the adoption of several measures for the renovation of the people here generally, yet, as they may not prove feasible, I forbear to trouble you with a detail of them; they must mainly depend upon the sanction and support of the head of this establishment."—*Mr. Beaver's Letter to the Governor and Committee, dated 10 November 1836.*

"Nearly 200 of the Klickatack tribe of Indians have congregated for agricultural purposes on a large plain, about 14 miles distant from the fort, during the last summer, when I have paid them several visits; on one of which, with the assistance of a youth who accompanied me, I vaccinated about 120 of them, the rest having undergone the operation at the hands of your medical officer. Their language is quite different from Chinook, and, I think, of easier acquisition, being less guttural and more harmonious; neither are their habits, in consequence of their not dwelling on the banks of the river, so depraved as those of that other tribe. They live principally by hunting, and on wild roots; their first attempt at cultivation being made this year, with potatoes, Indian corn and peas, furnished to them by chief-factor M'Loughlin; having no place in which to store its they have brought hither several bushels of the last-named produce to be reserved for seed till next year.

"Their little gardens are well fenced, and altogether do them great credit; indeed, I was surprised at the regularity and cleanliness of the potato rows, and I cannot help thinking that much good might be done among them by encouraging their praiseworthy efforts, in continuing a supply of various seeds and in providing them with a few agricultural implements, particularly a plough and a harrow, which they already possess horses to draw."—*Letter from Mr. Beaver, dated 10 October 1837.*

"It is to be regretted that American missionaries are so much encouraged here, for, independently of their motives, it is to be feared, that when they or their followers become numerous, the interests of the Company will be undermined; besides, they cost the latter no little expense. The bill of those who were lately here, for goods furnished out of the store and made by the tradesmen, many of whom were employed for a considerable time in working for them, amounted to nearly 400*l.*, as I am told. This may be paid, but a considerable time must elapse first. Added to this, two of the Company's servants were sent away with them to assist in erecting their new establishment. I mention this to show that servants are not, or at least ought not to be, scarce, although persons in the Company's employ, who have always been accustomed to the use of them, cannot procure them. Indeed it is very evident that we, who have a right to accommodation, are unable to obtain it, while upon those who have no such right, favours of all descriptions are heaped. There was a missionary here of the name of "Parker," for nearly a year; he arrived at Oahu in the Columbia the day before ourselves, and spoke in no very respectful terms of an establishment where he had received many substantial marks of hospitality more than board and lodging."—*Letter to Mr. Harrison, Deputy-governor Hudson's Bay Company, from Mr. Beaver, dated Fort Vancouver, 10 November 1836.*

"Monday, April 11.—Having made arrangements to leave this place on the 14th, I called upon the chief clerk for my bill; he said the Company had made no bill against me, but felt a pleasure in gratuitously conferring all they had done for the benefit of the object in which I was engaged. In justice to my own feelings, and in gratitude to the honourable Company, I would bear testimony to their uniform politeness and generosity; and while I do this, I would express my anxiety for their salvation, and that they be rewarded in spiritual blessings. In addition to the civilities I had received as a guest, I had drawn upon their store for clothing and goods to pay my Indians whom I had employed to convey me in canoes in my various journeys for hundreds of miles; to pay my guides and interpreters; and I had also drawn upon their provision store for the support of these men while in my employ.—*Journey beyond the Rocky Mountains in 1835, 1836 and 1837, by the Rev. Samuel Parker, A.M., p. 57.* Chambers' Edition.

## PROFITS of the TRADE, &c.

20. "The employment we afford at those seasons to many of the Indians, whereby they are brought into frequent communication and intercourse with our officers and servants, tends towards their gradual civilization and improvement, and we find our own interests promoted by an equitable and liberal system of trade and management"—*Reports, p. 16.*

"The principal benefit the Company derive from the exclusive licence of trade, is the peaceable occupation

20. "The prices paid to the natives for their furs, are, in general, exceedingly small. Throughout the whole of the protected territories, the value of goods bartered for furs is certainly under one-twentieth of the value of these furs in England.

"In one year the gross value of the furs traded by the Company amounted to 211,000*l.*, and the net profits for that year were declared at 119,000*l.*"—*Simpson's Life, &c., p. 428.*

"With respect to the furs of that

20. (a). "The Indians of this region even now make war upon each other on the most trivial occasion, and for the most part to satisfy individual revenge. The Hudson's Bay Company's officers possess and exert a most salutary influence, endeavouring to preserve peace at all hazards. It is now quite safe for a white man to pass in any direction through the part of the country where their posts are; and in case of accident to any white settler, a war party is at once organized, and the offender is hunted up. About a year previous to our arrival, an Indian was executed at Astoria for the murder of a white man whom he had found asleep, killed, and stolen his property. He was then taken,

## CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO COMPLAINTS OF

STATEMENTS exhibiting the Policy of the Hudson's Bay Company towards the Natives—continued.

occupation of their own proper territory, from which they draw nearly the whole of the profits of their trade, and for the protection of which they have a right to look to Government in common with the rest of Her Majesty's subjects, as the trade of the country embraced in the Royal licence is, as yet, of very little benefit to them, and affords greater advantages to the mother country in the employment of shipping, &c."—*Reports*, p. 26.

*Beaver*, p. 20.

that country, to rob their lawful owners of them by taking possession of them, either with no payment or a most inadequate one, is surely not a legitimate method of teaching him their proper use and value. Of articles bartered by the Company for peltry and other native produce, one-half may be classed as useless; one quarter as pernicious (ardent spirits); and the remainder as of doubtful utility."

STATEMENTS corroborating the Assertions of Sir J. H. Pelly—continued.

taken, tried, found guilty, and executed in the presence of most of the settlers. The culprit was a slave, and it was some time before the chief to whom he belonged would give him up. It was proved on the trial, and through the confession of the slave, that he had stolen the property and committed the murder by order of his master, who took all the stolen goods. The master made his escape when he found his agency had been discovered, and I understand that he kept himself aloof from all the Company's posts until the matter should be forgotten."—*Commodore Wilkes' Narrative of the United States' Exploring Expedition*, Vol. 4, p. 323.

(b) "In this way, however, order and decorum are preserved, together with steady habits, for few can in any way long withstand this silent influence. The consequence is, that few communities are to be found more well-behaved and orderly than that which is formed of the persons who have retired from the Company's service. That this power, exercised by the officers of the Company, is much complained of, I am aware, but I am satisfied that, as far as the morals of the settlers and servants are concerned; it is used for good purposes. For instance, the use of spirits is almost entirely done away with. Dr. M'Loughlin has acted in a highly praiseworthy manner in this particular. Large quantities of spirituous liquors are now stored in the magazines at Vancouver, which the Company have refused to make an article of trade, and none is now used by them in the territory for that purpose. They have found this rule highly beneficial to their business in several respects; more furs are taken in consequence of those who are engaged having fewer inducements to err; the Indians are found to be less quarrelsome, and pursue the chase more constantly; and the settlers, as far as I could hear, have been uniformly prosperous.

"In order to show the course of the Company upon this subject, I will mention one circumstance. The brig 'Thomas H. Perkins' arrived here with a large quantity of rum on board, with other goods. Dr. M'Loughlin, on hearing of this, made overtures immediately for the purchase of the whole cargo, in order to get possession of the whiskey or rum, and succeeded. The doctor mentioned to me, that the liquor was now in store, and would not be sold in the country; and added, that the only object he had in buying the cargo was, to prevent the use of the rum, and to sustain the temperance cause."—*Commodore Wilkes' Narrative*, Vol. 4, p. 330.

(c) "The mode in which their trade is carried on, will give some idea of the system pursued by the Company. All the imported goods are divided into three classes; viz. articles of gratuity, those of trade, and those intended to pay for small services, labour and provisions. The first consists of knives and tobacco; the second, of blankets, guns, cloth, powder and shot; the third, of shirts, handkerchiefs, ribands, beads, &c.

"These articles are bartered at seemingly great profits, and many persons imagine that large gain must be the result from the Indian trade; but this is seldom the case. The Indians and settlers understand well the worth of each article, and are not inclined to give for it more than its real value, besides getting a present or 'potlatch' to boot."—*Ibid.*, p. 332.

(d) "The Hudson's Bay Company, it cannot be doubted, exercises almost absolute sway over the whole of the North-west of America, and, it may be averred, also over the Oregon country. Their power is the only civilized power known to the Indians which they show any disposition to yield to, or even respect. Independently of the vast and complex machinery of internal and coasting commerce, which they have set to work throughout those almost boundless tracts—a machinery reduced to the most perfect and unerring regularity—and independently of the sway which their numerous servants, scattered far and wide, and intermingling with the natives, can give the Company, the strict honesty of their dealings (for they are now become too powerful and too wealthy to be placed under any necessity of practising either fraud or oppression to carry on their trade, and too humane and prudent to resort to these vile American expedients), and their humane endeavours to lift as far as lies within their individual scope, the natives, from their prostration and ignorance to the rank of Christianized and civilized men, endeavours which the natives are sagacious enough to perceive, and honest enough to acknowledge (speaking generally), have struck the roots of their power deep into the hearts of the aborigines."—*Dunn's History of the Oregon Territory*, p. 349.

## APPENDIX.

No. 1.\*

IT would be foreign to my purpose to enter into a lengthened description of this isolated colony; I shall merely bestow upon it a cursory glance, to give the reader some faint idea of its peculiar character. Situated under the 50th degree of north latitude, and 97th of west longitude, at an elevation of 800 or 900 feet above the sea, and stretching for upwards of 50 miles along the wooded borders of the Red and Assiniboine rivers, which flow through a level country of vast extent, it possesses a salubrious climate and a fertile soil;

but

\* This is the passage referred to in the Report under (No. 13), in quoting which, Mr. Alexander Simpson has omitted all that is here enclosed within brackets.

## THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

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but summer frosts, generated by undrained marshes, sometimes blast the hopes of the husbandman, and the extremes of abundance and want are experienced by an improvident people. Horses, horned cattle, hogs and poultry are exceedingly numerous. [Sheep have been brought by the Company, at great expense from England and the United States, and are reared with success.] Wheat, barley, oats, potatoes, turnips, and most of the ordinary culinary vegetables, thrive well. Pumpkins, melons and cucumbers come to maturity in the open air in favourable seasons. Maize, peas and beans have not been extensively cultivated; hops grow luxuriantly; flax and hemp are poor and stunted; orchards are as yet unknown.

The banks of the rivers are cultivated to the width of from a quarter to half a mile. All the back level country remains in its original state, a vast natural pasture, covered for the greater part of the year with cattle, and also furnishing the inhabitants with a sufficiency of coarse hay for the support of their herds during the winter. The length of this severe season exceeds five months, the rivers usually freezing in November and opening in April, when there is a fine sturgeon fishery; but Lake Winnipeg, the grand receptacle of the river waters, does not break up till the close of May. Two decked vessels ply on this lake during the summer, between the colony and the entrepôt of Norway House, situate at its northern extremity, where the river navigation to Hudson's Bay commences. The most common sorts of wood are oak, elm, poplar and maple; pines are likewise found towards Lake Winnipeg. Firewood is rafted down the rivers, from above the limits of the colony during the summer, or transported on sledges when the snow falls; but as this essential article is now through waste and neglect, growing less plentiful, many of the inhabitants have provided themselves with cast-iron stoves, which occasion a much less consumption of fuel. The two principal churches, Protestant and Roman Catholic, the gaol, the Company's chief buildings, the Bishop's residence, and the houses of some retired officers of the fur trade, are built of stone, which is brought from a considerable distance. The generality of the settlers dwell in frame or log houses, roofed with wooden slabs, bark or shingles, and for the most part whitewashed or painted externally. Not a man, however mean or idle, but possesses a horse; and they vie in gay carriages, harness, saddles and fine clothes. A great abundance of English goods is imported, both by the Company and by individuals, in the Company's annual ships to York Factory, and disposed of in the colony at moderate prices. Labour is dear, and produce of all kinds sells at a higher rate than could be expected in such a secluded place:

[Governor Simpson has long endeavoured by arguments and rewards to excite an exportation to England of hides, tallow, flax, hemp and wool, for the benefit of the settlers, but with little success.] The bulky nature of such exports, a long and dangerous navigation to Hudson's Bay, but, above all, the roving and indolent habits of the half-breed race, who form the mass of the population, and love the chase of the buffalo better than the drudgery of agriculture or regular industry, seem to preclude the probability of this colony rising to commercial importance.\* The currency of the place consists in the Company's notes, with a smaller amount of silver and copper coin. Fifteen wind and three water mills grind the wheat and prepare the malt of the inhabitants, who use neither barley nor oats in bread. Of all these mills, two only have been erected by a Roman Catholic, a gentleman in the Company's pay as warden of the plains; the rest are in the hands of the Protestants, who constitute but two-fifths of the population. It may be remarked, that while not a few of the children by native women of the Company's retired European servants, who are chiefly Orkneymen, inherit the plodding careful disposition of their fathers, the half-breed descendants of the French Canadians are, with rare exceptions, characterised by the paternal levity and extravagance superadded to the uncontrollable passions of the Indian blood. Many of the industrious Scotch, who first planted the colony in 1811, under the auspices of the late Earl of Selkirk, have saved handsome sums of money, besides rearing large families in rustic plenty. A considerable portion of this valuable class, however, dreading the predominance and violence of the half-breeds, with whom they have avoided intermarrying, have converted their property into money, and removed to the United States.

[Besides extensive purchases of grain and provisions for their transport and other service, the Company annually expends large sums at Red River in various works of public utility, such as experimental farming, erecting churches and other buildings, endowing schools, affording medical aid gratis to the poor, encouraging domestic manufactures, maintaining an armed police, dispensing justice, and in contributing to the support of two Protestant clergymen, of a Roman Catholic Bishop, and three priests from Canada.] These self-denying men are exemplary in their lives, zealous and indefatigable in their benevolent labours, among the fruits of which may be reckoned the conversion and location of a great number of Indians, of the Cree and Saulteaux or Chipeway nations. [To compensate this heavy outlay, the Company has hitherto derived no return; for the occasional sale of lands does not even defray the cost of the survey, they being in most instances bestowed gratis, though regularly purchased from the Indians, and the fur trade of the surrounding

\* Since this was written, I have learned with infinite pleasure, that the settlers have at length found out the only practicable outlet for their cattle and grain; the fine level plains leading to the Mississippi and the St. Peter's, where there is the promise of a sufficient market among the Americans. Domestic manufactures, too, which ought even to precede exportation, have at last made some progress in the shape of coarse cloths, stuffs, shawls, linen sacking, tanned leather, &c., all which tend to diminish the annual orders from England, and to render the people independent.

surrounding country has been long ago ruined by the colony; but under the Company's fostering care, a population of 5,000 souls has been nurtured, and a comfortable retreat has been provided for such of its retired officers and servants as prefer spending the evening of life with their native families, in this oasis of the desert, to return to the countries of their nativity. I cannot pass over without particular notice the admirable boarding-schools established by the Rev. Mr. Jones, where about 60 youth of both sexes, the intelligent and interesting offspring of the Company's officers, are trained up in European accomplishments, and in the strictest principles of religion.] Nor should I omit mentioning the Indian settlements founded by the Rev. Mr. Cockran, at the lower extremity of the colony. He has provided schoolmasters for the native children, and built places of worship, where he regularly officiates. He has constructed a windmill for the Indians, assists them in erecting their wooden houses, and with his own hands sets them the example of industry. At the other extremity of the colony, M. Belcour, one of the Roman Catholic priests, with untiring zeal, conducts a location of Saulteaux Indians on a smaller scale; I wish I could add that the improvement of the aborigines is commensurate to those beneficent cares; but unhappily the experience of Canada, of the United States, of California, in short, of all parts of North America where the experiment of ameliorating the character of the Indian tribes by civilization has been tried, is renewed at Red River. Nothing can overcome their insatiable desire for intoxicating liquors, and though they are here excluded from the use of spirits, and the settlers are fined when detected in supplying them with ale, yet from the great extent of the colony, they too often contrive to gratify that debasing inclination to which they are ready to sacrifice everything they possess. They feel no gratitude to their benefactors or spiritual teachers, and while they lose the haughty independence of savage life, they acquire at once all the bad qualities of the white man, but are slow indeed in imitating his industry and his virtues.

Yet among the native tribes there exist marked distinctions: the swampy Crees, who have long been employed in the Company's service at York Factory and other places, adopt steady habits with far greater facility than the proud Saulteaux, who contemptuously term the settlers gardeners and diggers of the ground.—*Extract from the Narrative of Discoveries on the North Coast of America.* By Thomas Simpson, Esq., published 1843, p. 10.

#### No. 2.

INDIAN lads educated in the Church Missionary Society's school at Red River, have been sent to instruct their countrymen in various parts of the Company's territory. In the countries of the Columbia and New Caledonia, to the westward of the Great Rocky Mountain chain, the missionary labours promise considerable success; there the climate is softened by the influences of the Pacific; food is abundant; the numerous natives do not lead the same solitary wandering lives as the Eastern tribes, but dwell together in villages. They are endowed with a greater capacity and quickness of apprehension, are more pliant and tractable in temper, are fond of imitating the customs of white men, and now receive with eagerness the truths of Christianity, from those upon whom but a few years ago they perpetrated the most barbarous murders; but the fever and ague, to which the country is very subject, has of late thinned their numbers. The Company's principal chaplain resides at their dépôt of Fort Vancouver, on the north side of the Columbia River, where agriculture, rearing of stock, and other commercial operations are prosecuted on a great scale. The same enlightened body has, of late years, liberally assisted American missionaries employed in instructing the dissolute maritime tribes, and in founding an American colony on the Willamette, a southern tributary of the Columbia, and has since conveyed across the mountains several Canadian priests, who, under the authority of the Bishop at Red River, are gone to form another British settlement on the shores of Puget's Sound, the nucleus of a future empire in the far West. The case is widely different in the frozen regions of the North; there the Indian hunters are scattered through interminable forests, into which civilization can never penetrate. Since the coalition of the rival companies, however, and the discharge of the noxious swarm of adventurers, who, encouraged by the license of a hot opposition, overran and well-nigh ruined the country, the precepts of morality and order have been instilled into the minds of the aborigines by many officers of the Company. No stronger proof of the salutary effect of their injunctions can be adduced, than that while peace and decorum mark the general conduct of the northern tribes; bloodshed, rapine and unbridled lust are the characteristics of the fierce hordes of Assiniboines, Piegan, Black Feet, Circees, Fall and Blood Indians, who inhabit the plains between the Saskatchewan and Missouri, and are without the pale of the Company's influence and authority.

It gives me sincere pleasure to say that a reconciliation has at length been effected between those lately inveterate and bloody enemies, the Saulteaux and Sioux nations. Under the safeguard of the Company's people, aided by the settlers, two bands of the latter tribe visited Red River during my residence there in 1834 and 1836; presents were given, and speeches were made both to them and the assembled Saulteaux, who upon the first occasion were very violent, and were only restrained from bloodshed by disarming and other vigorous measures; but, upon the last occasion, they smoked the calumet of peace, and slept in the same apartments with the Sioux at the Company's head-quarters, Fort Garry; the Sioux seemed highly gratified with the kindness and protection they experienced, and have on several occasions performed friendly offices to the Company's couriers and others passing through their country to the American garrison, on the river St. Peter's. They are a warlike, equestrian

equestrian race, with light sinewy frames and eagle eyes; who pursue the buffalo in the boundless plains of the Missouri and the Upper Mississippi.—*Extract from the Narrative of Discoveries on the North Coast of America. By Thomas Simpson, Esq., published 1843, p. 17.*

## No. 3.

FORT PELLY is a compact, well-ordered little place, sheltered from the north by a range of woods, with the Assiniboine winding a short distance in front. The only Indians there during our visit were a Saulteaux family, who, having suffered from privation, were kindly received, housed and fed, till they could resume the chase with a prospect of success. My observations place the establishment in lat.  $51^{\circ} 45' 20''$  N. Long.  $102^{\circ} 5' W.$ , variation,  $17^{\circ} E.$ —*Ibid., p. 38.*

## No. 4.

ON the 13th, I sent back my Carlton auxiliaries, after all hands had been gratified by a "ball," at which one of my companions, who was a capital fiddler, officiated as chief musician, a party of Chipewyans came in with an assortment of furs. They had been living in abundance on moose deer, and were clothed in the same manner as the people of the establishment. The Chipewyans are the most provident of all the northern tribes; and since the union of the rival companies in 1821, their numbers are decidedly on the increase.—*Ibid., p. 55.*

## No. 5.

NEXT morning (the 28th), a strong cold north wind blew, driving in our faces a storm of snow, which almost blinded us. We marched against it for several hours, when, at an island, we fell in with a Chipewyan hunter visiting his traps, and invited him to share our breakfast. After messing with the people I gave him a cup of tea and a handful of biscuit, when I was no less surprised than pleased to see the poor fellow reserve the latter to carry to his children at the lodge. At noon we spoke another hunter, belonging to the same camp; he had just killed a badger, which he was taking home. These men were well clothed, and supplied from Fort Chipewyan with everything necessary for this mode of life.—*Ibid., p. 63.*

The whole month of February was unusually mild, and at noon the sun not unfrequently asserted his increasing power by a gentle thaw. Messengers were continually arriving with favourable accounts from the Indian camps; a pleasing contrast to the preceding winter, which is rendered memorable to the poor natives by the ravages of an influenza, scarcely less dreadful than the cholera, that carried off nearly 200 of the distant Chipewyans. I say distant, because all who were within reach of the establishments were sent for and carried thither, where every care was taken of them; warm clothing and lodgings were provided, medicines administered, the traders and servants fed them, parting with their own slender stock of luxuries for their nourishment, till even the cold heart of the red man warmed into gratitude, and his lips uttered the unwonted accents of thanks.—*Ibid., p. 67.*

## No. 6.

It is with sincere pleasure I take this occasion of observing, that the harsh treatment of their women, for which the Chipewyans were, not long since, remarkable, even among the North American tribes, is now greatly alleviated, especially among those who have frequent communication with the establishments. At Great Bear Lake I had many opportunities of witnessing the conduct of this particular family, and always saw the females treated with kindness.

The present Chipewyan character, indeed, contrasts most favourably with that of the party which accompanied Hearne on his discovery of the Coppermine River, and who massacred the unhappy Esquimaux, surprised asleep in their tents at the Bloody Fall. A large proportion of the Company's servants, and with very few exceptions, the officers, are united to native women. A kindly feeling of relationship thus exists between them and the Indians, which tends much to the safety of the small and thinly scattered posts, placed as they are among overwhelming numbers, were those numbers hostile. The rising class of officers have begun to marry the young ladies educated at Red River, which will tend to give a higher tone to the manners and morals of the country, without, it is to be hoped, diminishing those mutual feelings of good-will that now subsist between the Indians and the traders resident amongst them.

The month of March proved as severe as February was mild; the thermometer fell to  $36^{\circ}$ , and ranged from  $20^{\circ}$  to  $30^{\circ}$  for many days. The aurora frequently exhibited its fantastic lights, but only once or twice vividly displayed the prismatic colours. An aged Cree hunter arrived with his family; feeling his strength, which had borne him through forest and flood for many a year, no longer equal to the chase, the old man said that he was come to end his days at the Fort. With care and attention, however, he soon began to revive; the whole family were furnished with everything necessary, had the same rations assigned to them as the regular servants, and continued to live in comfort at the establishment. Many other Indians came in from the different camps with furs and for supplies.

From some of the Chipewyans I learned that they had, in the course of the preceding summer, met with a party of Esquimaux at the confluence of the noble Thélew or Thélon River, with the Doobaut of Hearne, below the lake of the latter name, and not far from the influx

of these united streams into Chesterfield Inlet. This meeting was of the most amicable character, and they spent a great part of the summer together. The Esquimaux even proposed to send two of their young men to Athabasca, inviting the same number of Indians to pass the winter with them. The arrangement was agreed to by both parties, but was frustrated by some petty jealousy among the women. They also informed me that in 1832, some of the Athabasca Chipewyans accompanied the Churchill branch of their tribe on their annual meeting with other Esquimaux at Yath Kyed, or White Snow Lake of Hearne, which receives the united waters of the Cathawchaga and the rapid Kasan, or White Partridge River. This remarkable change from mortal hatred to frank and confident intercourse, is solely owing to the humane interposition of the Company's officers, who neglect no opportunity of inculcating on the minds of these savage tribes the propriety of their forgiving ancient wrongs, and uniting together in the bonds of peace and friendship. By the same influence, the warlike Beaver Indians of Peace River have been of late years reconciled to their old enemies, the Thæcanies of the Rocky Mountains, and the carriers of New Caledonia.—*Extract from the Narrative of Discoveries on the North Coast of America. By Thomas Simpson, Esq., published 1843, p. 69.*

## No. 7.

DURING this month I had the most convincing proofs that recklessness which prompts the Indian to prefer a momentary gratification to a substantial benefit. Earnest applications were made by the assembled Chipewyans for the re-introduction into their country of ardent spirits, which had been for many years discontinued by the Company's humane policy. Their attachment to the poisonous beverage, however, remained so strong, that every season parties of the tribe traversed the continent to Churchill, on Hudson's Bay, with no other purpose than to obtain it. At length its use was prohibited there also, and the Chipewyans renewed their solicitations. Instead of gaining their point, they were now justly reproved by their benefactor, Mr. Smith, and obliged to confess their own folly. The following is an extract of the Company's standing orders on these subjects:—"That the Indians be treated with kindness and indulgence, and mild and conciliatory means resorted to, in order to encourage industry, repress vice and inculcate morality; that the use of spirituous liquors be gradually discontinued in the few districts in which it is yet indispensable; and that the Indians be liberally supplied with requisite necessaries, particularly with articles of ammunition, whether they have the means of paying for it or not." It is equally the Company's inclination, and their interest, to render the natives comfortable. It is when they are well-clothed, and amply provided with ammunition, that they are best able to exert themselves in collecting furs and provisions. But, so far is it from the Company's wish to acquire an undue influence over them, by loading them with debts, that repeated attempts have been made to reduce the trade to a simple barter. In order to effect an object so beneficial to the natives themselves, the arrears of the Chipewyans have been twice cancelled since the junction of the two Companies in 1821, but the generous experiment has signally failed. The improvidence of the Indian character is an insurmountable obstacle to its success, and in the Chipewyans is aggravated by a custom which the whites have not yet been able wholly to eradicate. On the death of a relative they destroy guns, blankets, kettles, everything, in short, they possess, concluding the havoc by tearing their lodges to pieces. When these transports of grief have subsided, they must have recourse to the nearest establishment for a fresh supply of necessaries, and thus their debts are renewed. The debts of the deceased are, in every case, lost to the Company. The Indian debt system is, in reality, equivalent to the practice, in many civilized countries, of making advances to hired servants previous to the commencement of their actual duties. This is particularly remarkable among the French Canadians, who can scarcely be induced to undertake any work or service without first receiving part payment in advance. Their improvidence approaches to that of the Indian, and produces similar effects.

It is not perhaps generally known, that in some parts of the Indian territory the hunting-grounds descend by inheritance among the natives, and that this right of property is rigidly enforced. Where no such salutary law prevails, their main source of wealth, the beaver, would soon be exhausted by the eager search of the hunters, were it not for the judicious regulations of the Company, whose officers have, for many years past, exhorted the natives to spare the young of that valuable animal. In this praiseworthy design they have met with increasing success, according as the eyes of the Indians have been opened to their own true interests. But the attempt will be understood to be one of extreme difficulty, in consequence of that passion for depriving the animal creation of life so deeply implanted in the breast of the North American Indian, that it costs him a pang to pass bird, beast or fish without an effort to destroy it, whether he stands in need of it or not. Near York Factory, in 1831, this propensity, contrary to all the remonstrances of the gentlemen of that place, led to the indiscriminate destruction of a countless herd of reindeer, while crossing the broad stream of Haye's River, in the height of summer. The natives took some of the meat for present use, but thousands of carcasses were abandoned to the current, and infected the river banks, or floated out into Hudson's Bay, there to feed the sea-fowl and the Polar bear. As if it were a judgment for this barbarous slaughter, in which women and even children participated, the deer have never since visited that part of the country in similar numbers. It is to their own headstrong imprudence, which the example and influence of the traders cannot at all times control, that the occasional deaths by starvation among the natives, and, still more rare, abandonment of the aged and helpless, must be ascribed.—*Ibid., p. 72.*

## No. 8.

THE quantity of provisions furnished by the Indians to the establishments throughout the northern districts is inconsiderable. In the winter season, it is generally limited to the rib-pieces of the moose, red and reindeer, half dried in the smoke of their tents, and the bones removed for lightness of carriage; to which a few tongues are, perhaps, added. In the course of the summer, when the animals are easily hunted, and there is water transport everywhere, the more industrious families usually bring to their Fort a bale of "dried meat," consisting of the fleshy parts of the deer cut into large slices and dried in the sun, with a bladder or two containing fat, or a bag of "pounded meat," which, when mixed with boiled fat, forms the renowned pemican. When these scanty supplies prove insufficient, with the produce of their own fisheries, and, where the climate is suitable, of the ground cultivated, to support the few people who reside at each of the widely separate posts, two or more young active Indians without family, or with but small families, are engaged as "fort-hunters," and regarded as regular servants. The duty of these hunters is confined to the killing of large animals for the establishment; and such part of the meat as is not required by themselves and their families, is transported thither with dogs and sledges by the servants belonging to the place. To become fort hunter is the ambition of a northern Indian, for the situation is at once an acknowledgment of his skill, and places the finest and gayest clothing at his command. It is, however, necessary to change them from time to time, as an Indian no sooner forms the notion that his services are indispensable, than from that moment he slackens his exertions. Every prudent manager of a post endeavours to procure more provisions than the actual wants of his charge; he is thus enabled, when scarcity or ill-success overtakes his Indians, to afford them a timely, and always a gratuitous relief. I do not speak here of the comparatively mild climate of the Saskatchewan, where the mounted plain hordes often glut the establishments with the spoils of myriads of buffaloes, and threaten their existence by their dangerous visits; nor are these remarks applicable to the still more southerly districts bordering on Canada, where the natives, as well as the people in the Company's service, are in a great measure, fed upon imported provisions, purchased by the Company from the Americans. The principle universally acted on throughout the vast and now admirably governed fur countries, is, that the true interests of the native Indian and of the white man who resides in voluntary exile on his lands, are indissolubly united.—*Extract from the Narrative of Discoveries on the North Coast of America. By Thomas Simpson, Esq., published 1843, p. 69.*

## No. 9.

FROM the 10th to the 21st of June, the ice kept us prisoners at Fort Resolution, occasionally retreating a mile or so, as if to tantalize us, then closing and driving the fishermen and their nets ashore.

On the 12th we indulged our people with a dance, though the constant daylight was rather unfavourable to the dark complexions of the ladies. It was concluded by a general supper, at which tea was the beverage, all intoxicating liquors being, as already noticed, excluded from this sober land.

The 13th was marked by a thunder-storm of a terrible violence, unusual in these high latitudes; to which succeeded a week of beautiful weather. The games and sports of the people without the gates were generally at their height at midnight, when the coolness of the atmosphere incited to exertion. At every shout the echoes ran along the floating ice in the bay, passing from one fragment to another, and producing a succession of sounds, that became gradually softer and fainter till they seemed to mingle with the horizon. The mirage, too, exhibited some curious appearances. Mr. Dease vaccinated all the young people, Indian or half-breed, at the place; a benefit already conferred on the whole concourse of natives at Fort Chipewyan.—*Ibid., p. 87.*

## No. 10.

ON the 5th, we had a conference with the Loucheux, in which we declined their reiterated offers to send two or more of their number with us along the sea-coast, assigning the late murders as the cause of this resolution. At the same time, we laboured to dissuade them from their plans of retaliation and revenge. They expressed their sorrow at our determination to expose the lives of so small a party among such a treacherous people as the Esquimaux; earnestly cautioned us to be on our guard in every meeting with these perfidious savages, especially in the act of embarking, the moment they usually select for an attack; and declared, that if the latter injured us, whom, in common with all the whites, they regarded as their fathers and friends, the whole tribe would combine to exact a terrible vengeance. To this comfortable assurance we replied, that we, ourselves, entertained no apprehensions, and therefore enjoined them to banish all useless fears on our account. It is but justice to the Esquimaux to state, that from our inquiries, the Loucheux appear to have drawn the above chastisement upon themselves. For several years they had exacted and received a gift as "blood-money" from the former, on account of a Loucheux whom they asserted to have died of his wounds in an old encounter. On this last occasion, three of the Loucheux repeated the annual demand, with which the Esquimaux were about to comply, when, unfortunately, the very man so long reported dead, made his appearance. On this, the Esquimaux, after reviling the Loucheux for their falsehood and extortion, fell upon them, and, of the four, one only escaped, wounded, by flying to the woods. The traders have long been at great pains to effect a permanent reconciliation between these hereditary

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hereditary enemies. For this purpose, in 1817, and again in 1819, Mr. Dease gave considerable presents to the Louchoax chief to negotiate a peace, which lasted for several years.  
*Extract from the Narrative of Discoveries on the North Coast of America. By Thomas Simpson, Esq., published 1843, p. 100.*

## No. 11.

IN the afternoon we passed through "the Narrows," where the Loucheux chief was encamped like a brave general protecting his frontier. We had given a passage from Fort Good Hope to one of his young men, who seemed to consider himself as not a little honoured by our attentions; and he now explained to the chief our intention not to take any of his people to the coast. Yet such was their confidence in or regard for us, that several again volunteered their services.—*Ibid.*, p. 104.

Upon the beach was found the body of a female child about five years old, who we afterwards learned had been abandoned by the Outer Hare Indians. The poor child had lost both parents, and, having no other relatives to take care of it, was cruelly left to its fate. Our chancing to pass beyond the limit of the trader's travels, disclosed a circumstance which these people thought would have remained secret; for they have been so severely taken to task by the Company's officers for similar acts of barbarity, that they are now comparatively rare, and in general carefully concealed. The practice of mothers casting away their own female children, which is common at this day in China, Madagascar, Hindostan, and other countries more blessed by nature than Mackenzie River, was frequent here, as it was in all parts of America before the settlement of the whites, and is still among a tribe far to the westward of Fort Norman, who only descend for a short time from their mountains every second or third year, and have therefore not become humanized by intercourse with the establishments. (a) \* \* \* \* \*

Though the Company's posts on the Mackenzie River can barely subsist, the officers do all in their power to maintain poor objects and forsaken children.

Were they to give unlimited indulgence to the natives, half the population would be left on their hands; general starvation must ensue, and the surviving whites would have to abandon the country.

The following are Sir John Franklin's remarks on this painful subject:—

"Infanticide is mentioned by Hearne as a common crime amongst the Northern Indians, but this was the first instance that came under our notice, and I understand it is now very rare among the Chipewyan tribes; an improvement in the moral character which may be fairly attributed to the influence of the traders resident among them."

## No. 12.

THE natives now began to come in more frequently, occasionally aiding our people in the laborious transport of the meat. To some we lent guns; all were plentifully supplied with ammunition; and many of the more industrious were furnished with blankets, shirts and cloth dresses, instead of their own filthy deer-skins. Nothing was easier than for an active hunter to provide himself and family with these comforts; as he received, exclusive of all gratuities, a good price for his meat, which was usually delivered to us several days journey from the establishment. These Indians always experience a kind reception from us; they sit round the fire while we are partaking of our morning and evening meals, in other words, breakfast and supper; for dinner, that "word of power" in other climes, was unknown at Fort Confidence. When we have eaten, we present them with the remains of our repast, which is, indeed, the common custom of the north. After meals we occupy the same fireside, chatting or smoking together; at night they sleep in our hall, and on winter journeys and hunting excursions side by side with us in the same encampment. Every circumstance indicates a kindly familiar intercourse, the natural result of which is, that the Indians are attached to the Company's officers, whom, in common discourse, they style their "fathers" and their "brothers." In our particular case I must frankly confess my surprise at the facility with which we acquired their confidence, for, only in 1835, a cruel and unparalleled injury had been inflicted upon them by some half-breeds, who disgraced the service. Three of these wretches (two of them Red River Catholics, the third, a countryman of the victims) sought a quarrel with party of unfortunate Hare Indians, about one of their women, whom they carried off; and attacking them unawares, after partaking of their hospitality, brutally massacred 11 persons of both sexes. The criminals were taken out for trial to Canada, where the ringleader, Cadien, escaped with the mild sentence of banishment, and his accomplices were acquitted. It is to be hoped that the Company will persevere in their resolution to send no more of this caste to Mackenzie River.

It has, I understand, been sagely proposed by certain theorists to ameliorate the condition of the northern tribes by transforming a race of hunters into a pastoral people, through the domestication of rein-deer. But the character of the aborigines would alone present an insuperable obstacle to the experiment. They entertain a rooted superstition that the taming any of the wild rein-deer of their country would banish the whole race for ever from their lands. It was for this reason that, in 1817, Mr. Dease could not succeed in obtaining a couple of fawns from the Copper Indians at Great Slave Lake; nor were our applications at Fort Confidence more effectual. I was not sorry for it, as the poor animals could not long have been preserved from the fangs of the dogs, those indispensable assistants to white or red men. Even were this prejudice overcome, the Indians would immediately and naturally inquire,

(a) In a conversation with the Dog-Ribs, we afterwards learned that these mountain Indians are cannibals, and immediately upon any scarcity arising, cast lots for victims.

## THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 41

inquire, "Why should we be bound like slaves to follow the motions of a band of tame animals, when our woods and barren grounds affords us moose, red deer, buffalo, cariboo and musk cattle; when our lakes and rivers supply us with fish, for the mere trouble of killing them?"—*Extract from the Narrative of Discoveries on the North Coast of America.* By Thomas Simpson, Esq., published 1843, p. 220.

### No. 13.

WE at the same time received a distressing account of the fatal ravages of the small-pox among the Assiniboines of the Saskatchewan; 30 men of that tribe had crossed the plains to the banks of the Missouri in the summer of 1837, with the view of stealing horses. They found the unfortunate natives of the Missouri dying by hundreds of that terrible disease, which was introduced by an American steamboat; and, in the mad hope of assuaging the fever, casting themselves into the deadly stream. Under such circumstances they had no difficulty in making themselves masters of 160 horses, and with this rich booty, set out for their own camp; but the distemper had communicated itself to them, and ere long broke out on the way. Two thirds of the robbers perished, and the survivors were obliged to abandon their ill-gotten spoil. The Company's people at Carlton had been all vaccinated; yet the contagion was communicated from the Assiniboine camp, and two of the servants fell victims to its malignity. It is with sincere pleasure I add, that the humane precautions taken by Chief Factor Rowand, and the other gentlemen in the Saskatchewan, to vaccinate the Crees, saved the whole of that valuable tribe from the disastrous consequences of the malady, which happily did not penetrate further north.—*Ibid.*, p. 227.

### No. 14.

ON the 18th a man and boy arrived from a camp of strange Hare Indians, whom they had quitted to the westward in a starving condition; we immediately sent them a quantity of pounded meat, which was the means of saving their lives; and on the 27th the remainder of the party, 22 in number, chiefly old men, women and children, came to the establishment. They darted like vultures upon a kettle of meat which was prepared in the hall; but I must do them the justice to say, that, despite their hunger, they made a fair distribution of the food, which is more, I suspect, than Europeans similarly circumstanced, would have done. An old man, a woman and two children had died in the course of the winter; and one blind old man, brought to the house, was hauled on a sledge, or led with a string, and sometimes carried by his wife and daughter. The party had separated from the rest of the tribe; and the number of men capable of hunting being disproportionately small, caused the misery that we had the satisfaction to relieve. Our own stock of food was meanwhile fast wasting away; for Dog-Ribs, Hare Indians and Chipewyans, had now all congregated around us, and, instead of bringing us assistance, many of them drew rations from our store. Besides such occasional assistance, we constantly had some old or helpless persons left upon our hands.—*Ibid.*, p. 241.

### No. 15.

AT 3 P.M., a shout issued from among the trees on the south side of the River, and a young Indian soon came forth, breathless with running, to inform us that the camp was situated some distance off, at the foot of a conspicuous hill. Ordering our people to put up for the night, we told the youth to guide us to it; which he did, through bushes and swamps newly coated with ice. At the camp we found a scene of savage feasting, for the hunters had slaughtered a number of musk cattle. These animals descend from the barren mountains at this period, and resort for a while to the borders of the woods, in order, it is said, to rub off their cumbersome winter coat of hair. The natives were here snugly lodged in leather tents, instead of their usual open huts of branches. It was pleasing to think that the comfort and abundance they enjoyed, were in a great measure our own work, and the many smiling faces that crowded round us evinced their affectionate regard.—*Ibid.*, p. 247.

### No. 16.

BE this as it may, many of the Indians must have perished from hunger, had it not been for the prompt and extensive relief we afforded them, not merely while they remained with us, but comprehending provisions to take them to places where they might procure their own subsistence. This was done at our own imminent risk; for, though fall-fisheries were established immediately after our return from the coast, they were unproductive, and the winter fisheries yielded still less than those of the previous season.—*Ibid.*, p. 320.

### No. 17.

INDEPENDENT of frequent passing relief, we had in the same month the satisfaction of saving the lives of two old women and two little girls at the establishment. The latter especially, when brought in, were so weak as to be scarcely able to stand; but by care and kindness they recruited fast, and all remained with us till late in the spring. In short, the winter was one continued term of anxiety on our part for the natives around us; while our stock of food at the fort was, by the opening of March, almost entirely expended; our men having to perform journeys of two and three weeks duration to the southward, where alone reindeer were to be found. The only persons who actually perished during this miserable

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winter, were an elderly woman, and a new-born child, which the starving mother cast away. Far be it from us, however, to arrogate any merit for our exertions in preserving the lives of our fellow-creatures. It is a duty conscientiously fulfilled by every officer in the service when the occasion arrives, and was this very winter performed with equal effect by our next neighbour, Chief Trader M'Pherson, of Mackenzie River.—*Extract from the Narrative of Discoveries on the North Coast of America. By Thomas Simpson, Esq.*, published 1843, p. 322.

## No. 18.

EUROPEANS, in some points of view, have done unspeakable mischief to the Indians, and they owe them a long accumulated reparation; but as matters are now conducted, their condition is meliorated by their connexion with the whites, and their partial assimilation to European habits; and this is one step of approach toward their enjoyment of fuller blessings and more exalted privileges. Those who are attached to the forts are far more comfortable in their appearance than the others.—*Bishop of Montreal's Journal*, published 1845. Hatchard, Piccadilly, p. 39.

## No. 19.

WE walked, in the course of this day, over the Mission Farm, which constitutes, in fact, a branch of the society's establishment, for the improvement of the Indians, since it is the model for their own agricultural operations, and for this reason, as again in the case of Mr. Cockran at the Rapids, has been an object upon which the missionary has bestowed some closeness of personal attention. In all respects it is truly gratifying to observe how the condition and the habits of the Indian are bettered, by the exertions made under the auspices of the society in his behalf.—*Ibid.*, p. 57.

## No. 20.

NOTHING new was required in the way of examination; they are so constantly under the training, and so followed by the anxious and watchful eye of the shepherds set over them, that the amount of their religious proficiency, as well as the tenor of their ordinary deportment, was perfectly well known beforehand. In fact, the clergy know them as a father knows his children, and they know whom to admit and whom to debar; while other cases hung in the balance and were decided after being made the subjects of consideration, perhaps of some necessary allowance, with some particular charge, and the exactation of some particular promises. I had here an opportunity of seeing the great influence of the clergy, and the willing acquiescence of the people; proceeding, not from any artfully acquired authority, or determined establishment of an imperious ascendancy, but, as I verily believe, from the faithful devotedness of the men employed in the mission; from the concern which they have manifested for the souls of those committed to them; from the power of those holy truths which they have pressed upon the acceptance of sinful man; and from the general benefits also which, in the most conspicuous manner, have flowed from the formation of the mission in the colony.

These engagements were followed, of course, by the confirmations themselves, upon each of which occasions full service was performed. At the Lower Church, there were two confirmations held on the Sunday, on account of its contracted dimensions. In the morning, 192 women and girls were confirmed; in the evening, 150 men and youths. This last was again the precise number of persons confirmed at the Middle Church, when both sexes were admitted together; and it was very remarkable, that this was also the exact number confirmed on the day following at the Upper Church; 200, and something over, were confirmed at the Indian church on my return to it. I find that the total of the confirmations is noted to have been 846 persons in the Red River colony; it would have been about 1,000, but for the unavoidable absence of some of the subjects for the rite, either in the buffalo-hunting in the prairies, or with the boats sent to Hudson's Bay.—*Ibid.*, p. 60.

## No. 21.

IT was truly a very interesting spectacle to behold the churches filled, on all the different occasions connected with the confirmations, as well as at the public services on other days, by a people brought under the yoke of the Gospel, many of whom had been originally heathens, and the great body of whom had Indian blood in their veins; and the effect was indescribably heightened by the deep attention with which they listened, and the devout reverence with which they knelt to receive the imposition of hands; the comfortable hope, shedding its ray, over the solemnity that did in sincerity dedicate themselves to Christ. I was much struck at one of the preparatory meetings in Mr. Cockran's immediate charge, where, as I have said, the candidates came by divisions, by the perfectly correct and serious deportment of about 70 young girls; some of them still were school children, who were brought together without mothers or matrons, or elders of any kind, to put them under restraint; and I could not help thinking that it would have been difficult to collect the same number of such subjects in an European community, who would have preserved, as these girls did, an inviolate reverence even in the vacant intervals before and after service, and during the calling over of the names from a list which Mr. Cockran held in his hand.—*Ibid.*, p. 66.

## No. 22.

## No. 22.

THE Indians have strong passions, and are liable to be thrown into circumstances unfavourable to the maintenance of holiness; but, allowing for the necessary intermixture of tares with the wheat, I believe that the congregations of the church at the Red River may be called exemplary, and that the church has taken root in the place with the fairest auguries of a continuance and increase of blessed fruits of a practical kind.

With reference to the ordinations, it was no small satisfaction to be enabled, upon the spot, to add one to the number of labourers in this remote corner of the vineyard; and subsequently, during my stay, to admit to the grade of priesthood, both him and another whom it so happened that I had myself ordained deacon, in Canada, rather more than three years before. These gentlemen were, of course, duly examined, and their testimonials were presented to me made out in due form. Mr. M'Allum, who was to be appointed assistant-chaplain to the Company, with the understanding that he should succeed to the appointment of chaplain, had also a full recommendation from Governor Sir George Simpson.—*Bishop of Montreal's Journal*, published 1845. Hatchard, Piccadilly, p. 68.

## No. 23.

THE largest congregation at any of the public services, probably amounted to full 500 persons; the smallest did not fall short of 200.—*Ibid.*, p. 72.

## No. 24.

## SOCIETY OF THE RED RIVER.

I HAD at the forts the command of horses for my daily movements, and every accommodation afforded to me within, and every facility abroad which I could require; all done with the most cheerful kindness in the world. At the Lower Fort I was the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Finlayson, who were in temporary occupation, being *en route* for La Chine, where Mr. Finlayson had been appointed to the charge of the dépôt. He had just retired from the appointment of Governor of Assiniboin, for so the chief factor is styled in an instrument with the Company's seal attached to it, who has charge within the Red River colony in the territory; he was succeeded by Mr. Christie, who had just taken possession at the Upper Fort, where the residence of the Governor is made. Mrs. Finlayson, a lady from England, is sister to Lady Simpson and cousin to Sir George. Mr. and Mrs. Christie have a daughter, who had just returned from England, where she had passed some years in completing her education. Mr. Thom, the Recorder of the territory, an exceedingly able man, possessing a varied range of information, and deeply engaged, latterly, in biblical studies, has apartments, with his lady and children, within the Lower Fort. There are scattered about the settlement several respectable retired factors or traders of the Company, of whom Mr. Bird is one; some married to European, more to native wives. At this date, I imagine that, in the majority of instances, the original connexion has been that of a marriage regularly solemnized. One of the many blessings introduced by the Church Missionary Society into this region, is the correction of those irregularities which, with all their long train of mischiefs to the community, flowed from the absence of means for the celebration of matrimony. I was made acquainted with an old gentleman of the name of Bunn, now verging upon that period when the strength of man is but labour and sorrow, who was the first in the territory to set the example of marrying the Indian woman who had lived with him as his wife. It is but justice to say, that I believe many of the gentlemen who had formed these connexions, considered themselves as solemnly bound to the women, and only waited for an opportunity to be married; they also recognized and reared the children as their own legitimate representatives.—*Ibid.*, p. 89.

## No. 25.

## SOME other Statistical Particulars of RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

THE whole population of the Red River settlement, according to a census with which I was obligingly furnished, is 5,143; of which number 2,798 are Roman Catholics, and 2,345 are Protestants. No Protestant worship, except that of the Church of England, has ever been established among the people. The heads of families are 870; of whom 571 are Indians, or half-breeds, natives of the territory, 152 Canadians, 61 Orkneymen, 49 Scotchmen, 22 Englishmen, 5 Irishmen, and 2 Swiss. Wales, Italy, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Poland, and the United States of America, have each contributed one to the list; there is also one Esquimaux Indian. There are 730 dwelling-houses, 1,219 barns or stables, 18 windmills, and 1 watermill. From the level character of the country, it may be conceived that there is not much facility for the operations of the latter kind of construction. There are 821 horses, 749 mares, 107 bulls, 2,207 cows, 1,580 calves, 1,976 pigs, and 3,569 sheep. These particulars were taken in March 1843. The soil, which is alluvial, is beyond example rich and productive, and withal so easily worked, that although it does not quite come up to the description of the happy islands—*reddit ubi ceterum tellus inarata quotannis*—there is an instance, as I was assured, of a farm in which the owner, with comparatively slight labour in the preparatory processes, had taken a wheat crop out of the same land for 18 successive years; never changing the crop, never manuring the land, and never suffering it to lie fallow; and that the crop was abundant to the last. And with respect to pasture and hay,

they are to be had, *ad libitum*, as nature gives them in the open plains. The Company dispose of their land upon liberal terms, with a frontage along the river, and I think the uniform depth of a mile, with an understanding that till further arrangements take place, another mile is at the disposal of the owner for any benefits which he can derive from it; I speak from memory. It is only a small portion of the farms, next, the river, that is ever seen inclosed. The people revel in abundance, but it is all for home consumption; they have no outlet, no market for their produce. The liberality of the Company is also evinced in their permitting private traders to import goods in the Company's ships, although they, the Company, have stores of their own within the forts, in which articles of the same description are for sale. All these articles are brought across from Hudson's Bay, a distance of several hundred miles, in boats, and these boats are drawn across the different portages upon rollers, or in some places carried upon wagons. Hence, those articles which are of a heavy description are charged at a price seemingly out of all proportion to that of many others, which may be obtained at a moderate rate. A common grinding-stone is sold for 20s. sterling.—*Bishop of Montreal's Journal*, published 1845. Hatchard, Piccadilly, p. 97.

## No. 26.

## EARLIEST LABOURS of the Society through the Rev. J. West.

It was in the year 1820 that the attention of the Committee of the Church Missionary Society was first called (by the Hudson's Bay Company) to this scattered portion of the human family. Two proposals were then made to the society, one of which had reference to the Indians who lived to the west of the Rocky Mountains. No available opportunity, however, occurred for acting upon this suggestion.

The other proposal related chiefly to the Indians on this side of the same chain of mountains, and was the result of the following circumstances. In the year 1811, an agricultural settlement was formed on the banks of the Red River, to the south of Lake Winnipeg, by the late Earl of Selkirk. After an eventful history, this settlement was increased, owing to the same place having been selected as a location for retired servants of the Hudson's Bay Company. To this settlement, the Rev. J. West, an active friend of the society, was, in 1820, appointed chaplain.—*Appendix to the Bishop of Montreal's Journal*, p. 183.

## No. 27.

## BUILDING and opening of a New CHURCH in the Colony.—Establishment of SCHOOLS.

WHILE this remarkable transition from barbarism to civilization was taking place in the Indian settlement, Mr. Jones was successfully prosecuting his ministerial labours among the more mixed population of the upper part of the colony. The congregations at the Upper and Middle Churches consisted of about 800 or 900, including children, and the number of communicants amounted to about 130. The first church, though reflecting great credit on the zeal and exertions of Mr. West, and of all who were concerned in its erection, being built of logs, was fast going to decay, and it was found necessary to erect a more substantial edifice of stone. This object was accomplished by a liberal subscription on the part of the settlers, aided by a munificent grant from the Hudson's Bay Company, and a smaller grant from the Church Missionary Society. The building was opened for divine service on the 26th of November 1834. It is capable of accommodating comfortably 700 people, and 1,000 might find room without being over-crowded.

Five day-schools, containing about 400 children, had been established, besides two seminaries affording board, lodging and education to 25 young ladies, and 30 young gentlemen, children of the gentlemen engaged in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company. These were under the care and superintendence of Mr. and Mrs. Jones, assisted by a tutor and governess from England. At the different Sunday-schools, also, 300 received religious instruction. Moreover, the orderly demeanour, moral conduct and religious habits of all classes, were for the most part satisfactory and cheering.—*Ibid.* p. 218.

## No. 28.

## ARRIVAL of the Rev. A. Cowley and Mr. J. Roberts; Return of Mr. Roberts.

In 1841, the band of missionary labourers was strengthened by the addition to their number of the Rev. A. Cowley and Mr. J. Roberts. Mr. Roberts laboured usefully for two years as a catechist, and has subsequently returned to this country. Mr. Cowley has been engaged in assisting Mr. Cockran in the upper settlement, and in superintending the formation of a new station at Manitoba Lake. Since the ordination of Mr. M'Allum, Mr. Cowley has given his whole time to the Manitoba station.—*Ibid.* p. 229.

## SUMMARY of the Stations in the Colony of RED RIVER.

By the last accounts, the number of persons attending public worship in the four churches at the Red River amounted to 1,723; the number of communicants was 454, and there were nine schools, containing 485 scholars.

## THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 45

**FORMATION of the CUMBERLAND STATION.**—Appointment to it of the Rev. *J. Hunter*, and his Arrival.

In 1839, the Committee had the satisfaction to find that the Hudson's Bay Company were disposed to countenance and promote the formation of a missionary station at Cumberland House, one of their posts, about 500 miles from the Red River. The financial circumstances of the society prevented the committee from availing themselves of this opening to the extent which they desired. In order, however, that some beginning might be made, Mr. Henry Budd, who had been for some time in connexion with the society as a school-master, was sent to that neighbourhood in June 1840. When he had been labouring for about a year, he was enabled to send home an encouraging account of the success which had attended his exertions. After the lapse of another year, the Rev. J. Smithurst was anxious to visit the infant station, with a view to strengthen Mr. Budd's hands, and to baptize such as might be prepared for that ordinance. \* \* \* \* \*

The school was found to contain 31 Indian children, all neat and clean. On examination, it appeared that they had made very good progress in learning. There were but few adult Indians at the station when Mr. Smithurst arrived, because they were necessarily engaged in procuring subsistence at a fishing place about a day's journey off; but he was informed that they would not fail to reach the station on Saturday, according to their regular custom. Accordingly on that day he wrote.

In the afternoon, a whole fleet of canoes made their appearance, and formed a most pleasing scene. The party consisting of from 60 to 70 persons, pitched their tents alongside the mission establishment, in order to attend the services of the Lord's Day. This was indeed one of the most cheering sights I ever witnessed, and called forth feelings of the deepest gratitude to God, that he should have inclined the hearts of so many to seek after the way of salvation.

Up to a late hour on Saturday evening, as well as on the following morning, Mr. Smithurst was engaged in a close examination of the candidates for baptism individually. He reported that "the result of the examinations was highly satisfactory."

June 26, 1842, is a day much to be remembered in the annals of this mission. In the afternoon, Mr. Smithurst had the privilege of admitting into the church of Christ by baptism, 85 Indians, of whom 38 were adults, and the remaining 47 their children.

In the summer of 1843, Mr. Budd reported that the 85 baptized Indians continued steadfast in the faith, and manifested an increasing desire after divine things, and that there were 58 candidates for baptism awaiting the arrival of a clergyman. The urgent need of an ordained missionary for this interesting station was met by the appointment of the Rev. J. Hunter, who with Mrs. Hunter arrived at York Fort in August last, and hoped to reach his destination in the course of the following month. By accounts received from Mr. Budd subsequently to Mr. Hunter's departure, it appears that the number of candidates for baptism had increased to 92. There were 32 children in the school, 19 of whom could read. Most of those who had been baptised had crops of potatoes growing, and had prepared wood for building houses. At this station, there are now nearly 200 Christian converts, who four years ago were all heathens, and who had then never heard the glad tidings of the Gospel. When it is considered that Mr. Budd was one of the first Indian boys consigned to Mr. West's care in 1820, it will be readily allowed that the account of this station furnishes a most striking illustration of the value of native agency.—*Appendix to the Bishop of Montreal's Journal*, p. 232.

## MANITOBA LAKE and FORT ELICE.

THE station at Manitoba Lake, to which allusion has already been made, is about 120 miles west from the Red River, and was commenced by the Rev. A. Cowley in 1842.

Another attempt has also been made at Fort Ellice, near Beaver Creek, on the great plain of the Missouri, about 300 miles from the settlement.—*Aud.* pp. 229-234.

COPY of LAND DEED, referred to at page 26.

WHEREAS the said \_\_\_\_\_ is  
desirous of becoming a settler upon the land hereinafter described or intended so to be,  
being certain part of a territory in North America, belonging to the said Governor and \_\_\_\_\_ Company.

Company, and held under the Crown by Charter. Now THEREFORE THIS INDENTURE  
WITNESSETH, that in consideration of

Lot No.

and in consideration also of the covenants hereinafter contained on the part of the said Governor and Company do hereby grant, demise, and lease unto the said they, the assigns, ALL THAT piece or parcel of land, being his executors, administrators and of Lot No. , as described at large in the official survey of Red River Settlement, and containing more or less English acres,

with the necessary appurtenances thereto, To HAVE AND TO HOLD the said piece or parcel of land hereby demised or intended so to be, and every part thereof with the appurtenances, unto the said his executors, administrators and assigns, from the day next before the day of the date of these presents, and for and during and unto the full term of one thousand years, thence next ensuing; yielding and paying therefore yearly and every year, during the said term, and upon the Michaelmas day in each year, the rent or sum of one pepper-corn, the first payment whereof to be made upon the twenty-ninth day of September next ensuing the date hereof. AND the said for himself, his heirs, executors and administrators, doth hereby covenant and agree with the said Governor and Company, in manner following, that is to say, That he the said

shall or will within forty days from the date hereof, settle and establish himself or themselves and continue to reside upon the said hereby demised land, and shall or will within five years from the date of these presents, bring, or cause or procure to be brought into a state of cultivation, one-tenth part of the said hereby demised land, and thenceforth continue the same in such state. AND that during the said term, he the said

his executors, administrators and assigns shall not, directly or indirectly, mediately or immediately, violate or evade any of the chartered or licensed privileges of the said Governor and Company, or any restrictions on trading or dealing with Indians or others, which have been or may be imposed by the said Governor and Company or by any other competent authority, or in any way enable any person or persons to violate or evade, or to persevere in violating or evading the same, and in short shall obey all such laws and regulations as within the said Settlement now are or hereafter may be in force for preventing the distillation of spirits, for preserving internal peace, for repelling foreign aggression, for making and repairing roads and bridges, and for encouraging and promoting general education and religious instruction. AND that he the said his executors, administrators or assigns, shall or will from time to time, and at all times during the said term, contribute in a due proportion to the expenses of all public establishments, whether of an ecclesiastical, civil, military or other nature, including therein the maintenance of the clergy, the building and endowment of schools which are or shall or may be formed under the authority of the Charter or Charters hereinbefore referred to. AND also that he or they at proper seasons in every year, and in or towards the making and repairing of such roads and highways as lie within

miles from the said hereby demised premises, shall and will employ himself or themselves, and his or their servants, horses, cattle, carts and carriages, and other necessary things for that purpose, where and when required so to do by the surveyor or overseer for the time being appointed for the making and amending public roads, bridges and highways within such limits as aforesaid; such requisition, nevertheless, in point of time, not to exceed six days in each year, computed day by day and from Michaelmas to Michaelmas. AND also that he the said

his executors, administrators and assigns shall not, nor will, without the license or consent of the said Governor and Company for that purpose first obtained, carry on or establish, or attempt to carry on or establish in any parts of North America, any trade or traffic in or relating to any kind of skins, furs, peltry or dressed leather, nor in any manner directly or indirectly aid or abet any person or persons in carrying on such trade or traffic; nor shall nor will at any time or times during the said term distil, or cause or procure to be distilled, spirituous liquors of any nature or kind soever, either upon the land hereby demised, or within any other part of the territories belonging to the said Governor and Company in North America, nor during the said term knowingly suffer or permit any other person or persons whomsoever to distil any such liquors upon the said demised land, or any part thereof.

AND

THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 47

AND the said for himself, his heirs, executors, and administrators, doth hereby further covenant with the said Governor and Company, and their successors, that he the said his executors, administrators and assigns, will use his and their best endeavours to maintain the defence and internal peace of the territories of the said Governor and Company in North America, and shall and will be chargeable therewith according to such laws and regulations as are now in force in respect of the same territories, or as shall from time to time be made by competent authority; and also that he the said his executors, administrators or assigns, shall not nor will at any time or times during the said term, or by any direct or indirect, mediate or immediate manner, ways or means, infringe or violate, or set about or attempt to infringe or violate, or aid, assist or abet, or set about or attempt to aid, assist or abet, or supply with spirituous liquors, trading goods, provisions, or other necessities, any person or persons whomsoever, corporate or incorporate, or any prince, power, potentate or state whatsoever, who shall infringe, or violate, or who shall set about or attempt to infringe or violate the exclusive rights, powers, privileges and immunities of commerce, trade and traffic, or all or any other of the exclusive rights, powers, privileges and immunities, of or belonging or in anywise appertaining to, or held, used or enjoyed by the said Governor and Company and their successors, under their Charter or Charters, without the license or consent of the said Governor and Company and their successors for the time being first had and obtained. AND LASTLY, that he the said his executors, administrators or assigns, shall not nor will at any time during the said term, under-let or assign, or otherwise alienate or dispose or part with the actual possession of the said land hereby demised, or any part thereof, for all or any part of the said term, or any interest derived under the same, without the consent in writing of the said Governor and Company for the time being first had and obtained. AND ALSO, that he the said his executors, administrators or assigns, shall or will within six calendar months from the date hereof as to these presents, and within six calendar months from the date of each respective assignment or under-lease to be made under or through these presents, and with respect to each such assignment and under-lease respectively cause these presents and every such assignment or under-lease when made, to be registered in the register of the said territories in North America, or of the district in which the said hereby demised land shall be situate, and wherever such register shall be kept at the time. PROVIDED ALWAYS, nevertheless, and it is hereby declared and agreed, that if the said his executors, administrators or assigns, shall not in all things well and truly observe and perform all and every the covenants and agreements herein contained, on his and their behalf to be observed and performed, then, and in either of such cases, and either upon or after the first breach, or any subsequent breach or breaches of covenant, and as to any subsequent breach or breaches, notwithstanding there may have been any waiver or waivers, or supposed waiver or waivers thereof, by the acceptance of rent or otherwise, it shall or may be lawful to and for the said Governor and Company, and their successors or assigns, to enter into and upon the said hereby demised premises, or any part thereof, in the name of the whole thereof, and to have, hold, retain and enjoy the same as in their former state, and also to put an end to and determine the said term of one thousand years, or so much thereof as shall be then unexpired, and all and every person or persons then occupying the same premises, or claiming title thereto, to put out and amove, any thing hereinbefore contained to the contrary notwithstanding. IN WITNESS whereof, the said parties to these presents have hereunto set their hands and seals, the day and year first above written, at Red River Settlement aforesaid.

Signed, sealed and delivered, in the presence of

— No. 9. —

COPY of a LETTER from A. K. Isbister, Esq., to Earl Grey.

My Lord,

77, Jubilee-street, Mile-End-road,

26 April 1847.

As only one opportunity occurs in the course of the year of communicating with the inhabitants of Red River, I venture most respectfully to call your attention to the memorial I had the honour to forward your Lordship, on the 17th of February last, on the part of the delegates from the natives of that country.

Your Lordship will perceive that a necessity of immediate attention to the subject arises from the return of two of the delegates, who carried with them a copy of the Act of William and Mary, which will of necessity become public both in Canada and their native country. Although not popularly recognized in England, the inhabitants of Canada have always been aware that the "Licence" for exclusive

No. 9.  
A. K. Isbister, Esq.,  
to Earl Grey,  
26 April 1847.

trade of 1842, refers only to the countries not embraced under the original charter of Charles II., and having always considered themselves unjustly excluded from participation in it, will not be slow to construe the non-renewal of the Act in their own favour, as abrogating the charter, and giving them an opportunity of engaging in the trade.

It is, therefore, the more desirable that the inhabitants of Rupert's Land should receive some immediate intimation of the intention of Her Majesty's Government with respect to their petition, lest advantage be taken of the unsettled state of the country, and the season of the year, traders should be sent in from Canada to the interior, and some collisions be the consequence.

By your Lordship's last communication, I am informed that the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company has been requested by you to reply to the allegations contained in the memorial. I venture, respectfully, to suggest, that Sir George Simpson, having been in this country for some time since that date, he can have no difficulty in doing so, and there can be no necessity for delay on that account.

I have, &c.

(signed) A. K. Isbister.

— No. 10. —

No. 10.

B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.,  
to A. K. Isbister,  
Esq.,  
3 May 1847.

COPY of a LETTER from B. Hawes, Esq., M.P., to A. K. Isbister, Esq.

Sir, Downing-street, 3 May 1847.

I AM directed by Earl Grey to acquaint you, in answer to your letter dated 26th ultimo, that your previous communication having been referred to the Hudson's Bay Company for their Report, that Report did not reach Lord Grey till the 26th ultimo. The papers, being very voluminous, will necessarily make a great demand on His Lordship's time and attention; it will therefore be impossible for his Lordship to return an immediate, or promise a very early answer to the complaints which you have preferred on behalf of the North American Indians.

I have, &c.

(signed) B. Hawes.

— No. 11. —

COPY of a LETTER from the Delegates from the Red River Settlement to Earl Grey.

No. 11.  
Delegates from the  
Red River Settlement  
to Earl  
Grey,  
28 May 1847.

Petition, Vide p. 4, of  
t his Return.

77, Jubilee-street, Mile-End-road,

28 May 1847.

My Lord,  
As we cannot, consistently with our duty to those we represent, allow the present Session of Parliament to close without fulfilling their instructions, we beg leave to enclose a copy of them, that you Lordship may be acquainted with their nature, as also the petition which has been entrusted to us for presentation to Her Majesty.

Not having been favoured with an opportunity of presenting it personally to your Lordship, we have most respectfully to request that you would be pleased to take an early opportunity of laying it before Her Majesty.

We have, &c.

(For the Delegates.)

(signed) A. K. Isbister.

Enclosure in No. 11.

COPY of INSTRUCTIONS to the Delegates by the Members of the Committee.

Encl. in No. 11.

We, the undersigned members of a Committee elected by the people in order to redact a petition, to elect a messenger, and commit to writing instructions to the same, in conformity with the desires and unanimously known interests of the people, have inscribed the following observations:

It

## THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

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It will be a duty to the commissioner to take the opportunity of every favourable circumstance to give a true state of the manner in which this colony and this country in-general is governed; to expose sincerely the desires of its inhabitants, and the possible improvement for their welfare. He shall make use of moderation, speaking of those whose interests are opposed to ours with discretion, and in honest terms. He shall have a peculiar care in advancing nothing but what could be duly proved.

He must note, previously, that the Company having brought from the succession of Lord Selkirk his rights upon this colony, we do consider the same Company as being obliged to fulfil the contracts of it, and to promote the prosperity of the said colony.

He shall represent,—

1st. That several individuals are complaining that the Company have obliged them to pay lands, without giving them any contract in legal form, and in spite of their will, the officers of the Company, retaining upon the wages of their servants the price of the same lands, which price has been placed not in the municipal trunk (bank), but in that of the Company; is it then that the Company might have the property of the lands? This appears to us inseparably united to the rights of the Crown.

2d. The Company gives in circulation, bills; the exchange thereof cannot be received but in London, a thing which is impossible to the greatest number of us. Could we not have a right to require that exchange of them be done in this country, and in the most central part of the colony?

3d. Already the chief factor, named Governor of the Assiniboin, has made us to understand that he might suddenly stop the course of the money-papers, which would expose us to losses, and occasionate great difficulties in our transactions. In order to avoid a danger of which we have threatened, and that the least pretext in a quick-minded man might lead to execution, the commissioner shall invoke the influence of his Lordship, in order to obtain that silver money be put in course in this country; the bank-houses or Company-house being too far off from us.

4th. Le portage of certain goods on the Company's ship having been refused under eluding pretexts, and with the visible end of discouraging, could not the Company be obliged to take, on their bond, everything that would be exported from the colony at the risk and expenses of private traders? Seeing that the Company's exclusive right to the only important branch of commerce, until now, take off for another ship a chance of an advantageous load, when it would consist in articles exclusive from furs.

5th. That if the Company must have for some time again the exclusive right in the trade of this country, would it not be a duty of justice that they would be obliged to purchase at reasonable prices all that the inhabitants have to sell; and does it not look unjust, that having kept exclusively for them all the advantages, they could not be obliged to take the changes?

6th. The same exclusive right would seem to put us, in reason, to require from the Company to bring to the shop of the colony the things necessary, and in a sufficient quantity for the want of the inhabitants; then it is common to us, wanting things the most important to life in this country; viz. gunpowder, thread for nets, tea, &c.; the same articles being sometimes taken off from the colony shop to be transported to trade posts afar, and even on the American territory, and this to the great discontent of the settlers.

7th. We think the Company is guilty of an abuse in extending their claims as far as to forbid to the inhabitants of this country to exchange between themselves furs; and we believe that they have acted unjustly by confining in gaol individuals who were not attempting, who had not even the idea to take off from the country the furs that they had, and also in putting under a caution and seizing the goods imported, under that pretence that they were intended to be exchanged for furs. We had believed, that in law we could not be punished for the intention, but that the infraction of the law only could deserve punishment.

8th. That the wise laws forbidding to deliver intoxicating liquors to the Indians being in force amongst the settlers, we feel it repugnant to see an exception for the Company in the penalties of that law; that it would be forbidden to the settlers to sell beer to the Indians under penalty of fine, and that the Company be free to sell strong liquors to the same Indians. That partiality excites indignation against the legislators.

9th. The commissioner shall beseech his Lordship to supply by his credit to the wants of formalities from the part of a people which lives too far off to be aware of them, and to have the goodness to do so, that the attention of our good Queen be rather fixed upon the truth of our observations, and the sincere intention that we have to keep the peace and spare the life of Her devoted subjects.

## 50. CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO COMPLAINTS OF

## — No. 12.—

No. 12.

B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.,  
to Sir J. H. Pelly,  
Bart.,  
5 June 1847.COPY of a LETTER from *B. Hawes*, Esq., M. P., to *Sir J. H. Pelly*, Bart.

Sir;

Downing-street, 5 June 1847.

No. 8. of the series.

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your letter and its enclosures of the 24th April, containing your reply to the complaints preferred against the conduct of the Hudson's Bay Company towards the inhabitants of the territory in North America which is under their jurisdiction.

Having carefully considered the documents submitted on both sides, Lord Grey directs me to inform you, that so far as he is able to form an opinion upon statements resting, to a great extent, on mere assertion, he is of opinion that the charges brought against the Company are for the most part groundless. His Lordship is glad to perceive the care manifested for the moral and religious condition of the population under your control, and that the trade in spirits is discouraged; but, nevertheless, Lord Grey considers that the state and condition of the people under the Government of the Company deserves to be further inquired into. Means will therefore be taken for this object, in the full belief and conviction that the Hudson's Bay Company will co-operate with his Lordship in securing ample protection to, and the impartial administration of justice among, the people residing in the extensive territory confided to your superintendence.

I have, &amp;c.

(signed) *B. Hawes*.

## — No. 13.—

COPY of a LETTER from *B. Hawes*, Esq., M. P., to *A. K. Isbister*, Esq.

Sir,

Downing-street, 14 June 1847.

No. 13.  
B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.,  
to A. K. Isbister,  
Esq.,  
14 June 1847.

WITH reference to my letter of the 5th of March, in which I stated, that it was the intention of Earl Grey to refer your allegations respecting the conduct of the Hudson's Bay Company towards the inhabitants of their territories in North America, for a report from that Company, I am directed by his Lordship to acquaint you, that on the 24th of April, Sir John Pelly addressed a letter to this office, containing the answer of the Company to the charges you had brought against it. The examination, which it has been necessary to institute into this paper, has unavoidably occupied some time; but after carefully weighing both your accusations and Sir J. Pelly's answer, Lord Grey is of opinion, so far at least as he can form any judgment upon statements which rest, on both sides, to a great extent on mere assertion, that the charges you have brought against the Hudson's Bay Company are groundless. Notwithstanding this conclusion, it is Lord Grey's intention to transmit copies of your charges, and the defence of the Company, to the Governor-general of British North America, with instructions to his Lordship to institute a further inquiry into the subject which you have brought under the notice of this office, and to ascertain what steps it may be necessary to take for the benefit and protection of the persons residing within the limits of the Hudson's Bay Company's territories.

*24 April 1847.*  
As the correctness of the statements made on this subject will be more completely ascertained by a full and open disclosure of the representations on both sides, Lord Grey directs me to furnish you with a copy of the counter-statement received from Sir J. Pelly.

I am further directed to state to you, that Lord Grey has laid before the Queen the petition which you transmitted in your letter of the 28th ultimo, and that Her Majesty was pleased to receive it very graciously.

I have, &amp;c.

(signed) *B. Hawes*.

## — No. 14.—

THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

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— No. 14. —

COPY of a LETTER from A. K. Isbister, Esq., to Earl Grey.

No. 14.

A. K. Isbister, Esq.  
to Earl Grey,  
21 June 1847.

My, Lord,

77, Jubilee-street, Mile-End-road;  
21 June 1847.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge a communication from Mr. Under-Secretary Hawes, of the 14th instant, transmitting a Report from the Hudson's Bay Company, on the memorial which I had the honour to forward to your Lordship on the part of the natives of Rupert's Land, on the 17th of February last.

The specious character of this Report renders a detailed reply to it necessary, and I shall take an early opportunity of laying such before your Lordship.

Leaving to the test of the inquiry which your Lordship has been pleased to institute, the truth of the allegations advanced in our memorial, I shall at present confine myself to a few words on the subject of the authorities which the Hudson's Bay Company have adduced in support of the various statements by which those of our memorial are sought to be impugned. These authorities are, the Bishop of Montreal, Commodore Wilkes, Mr. Parker, and Messrs. Simpson and Dunn, both servants (and one of them a partner) of the Company.

The extracts from the Bishop of Montreal's Journal, given in the Appendix to the Report, refer, I find, almost exclusively, to the missions of the Church Missionary Society at the Red River settlement, of which his Lordship speaks in terms of high and deserved commendation. As I must beg leave to repeat, and to refer to the society itself for the truth of what I say, that these missions are in no way supported or assisted by the Hudson's Bay Company, I am at a loss to conceive on what ground the authors of the Report can claim for themselves any credit on the score of the prosperity of these institutions. At the same time, it ought to be borne in mind, that while our memorial is professedly occupied with the effects of the Company's system of trade on the Indians of the interior, the Bishop of Montreal's Journal, which is adduced as an authority against it, is confined solely to an account of the colony on the Red River, which is not a fur district at all, and is, moreover, only a few miles beyond the United States' frontier. The same remark applies to Fort Vancouver, situated on the banks of the Columbia River, and within American territory. In estimating the value of the testimony borne in favour of the Company's management at this place by Commodore Wilkes and Mr. Parker, it is important that your Lordship should be made aware of some facts which are not generally known, but which very satisfactorily account for the favourable opinion of these gentlemen.

The plans of the United States' Government, for the colonization of Oregon, have from the first received the cordial aid and co-operation of the agents of the Hudson's Bay Company stationed in that territory, so that the various emigrant parties, which from time to time leave the United States for this country, can at all times calculate on receiving at Fort Vancouver whatever supplies they require, whether they can pay for them or not. A party of British subjects, on the other hand, who went over some years ago from Red River, with the view of forming a British settlement in this territory, were so dissatisfied with the treatment they received at the hands of the Company's agents, that, after an unsuccessful attempt to carry out their original intention, they retired in a body across the Columbia, to the American settlement on the Willamette, where they have ever since continued under the protection of the American laws and government. Dr. M'Laughlin, the Company's Superintendent in Oregon, to whose instrumentality Great Britain owes the loss of the fairest portion of this fine territory, after a long career of treachery to his own country and to his employers, has at last thrown off all disguise, and openly declared himself what he has long been in heart, an American citizen. It is true, that for this conduct on the part of their superintendent and representative in Oregon, the Directors of the Hudson's Bay Company here can scarcely be held accountable, but the facts I have stated are no less true, and no less satisfactorily account for the favourable testimony borne to their officers, not only by Commodore Wilkes and Mr. Parker, but by all Americans whatsoever.

In contrast with the testimony of these gentlemen, and in corroboration of what has just been stated, I beg leave to refer your Lordship to the "Narrative of a Voyage round the World," by Sir Edward Belcher, a British officer in command of a surveying squadron in the Pacific, who visited Fort Vancouver in 1839, under similar circumstances with Commodore Wilkes, but did not, I am sorry to say, experience a similar reception. His testimony your Lordship will find to be somewhat different from that of the American Commodore and the American Missionary, whom Sir J. H. Pelly plausibly adduces as "above all suspicion of partiality in favour of the Hudson's Bay Company."

With respect to the two remaining authorities, Messrs. Simpson and Dunn, I might justly take exception to both these individuals as witnesses in the case, the former having been a partner of the Company at the time his Narrative was penned, and looking forward to promotion to a higher grade, and the latter being also in their service.

The "Report" is copiously interspersed with references, in support of the various statements advanced in it, which turn out on examination to be almost entirely extracts from the work of Mr. Thomas Simpson. Unfortunately, however, for the credit of this gentleman as an authority, several letters of his, written to his brother about the same time that he was engaged in preparing his Narrative for the press, have been published in his "Life," alluded to in the memorial, and in these letters various opinions and statements appear, as contradictory as it is possible to conceive of those he has expressed in the work to which the authors of the Report so copiously refer. Which of these is to be considered as conveying Mr. Simpson's real sentiments on the Hudson's Bay Company, I leave every candid mind to judge. With respect to the work of Mr. Dunn, I need only say, that that gentleman is himself at present in London. The authors of the Report have good reason for choosing to refer rather to his work than to himself.

I shall take an early opportunity of addressing your Lordship at greater length in support of our memorial, the various allegations of which, I venture to say, I shall have little difficulty in establishing to your satisfaction.

I have, &c.  
(signed) A. K. Isbister.

## — No. 15.—

COPY of a LETTER from Sir J. H. Pelly, Bart., to Earl Grey.

No. 15.  
Sir J. H. Pelly,  
Bart., to Earl Grey,  
21 June 1847.  
\* Page 50.

My Lord,

Hudson's Bay House, 21 June 1847.

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Under-Secretary Hawes' letter, of the 5th \* instant, stating that your Lordship, having carefully considered the documents submitted on both sides, is of opinion, so far as you are able to form an opinion upon statements resting to a great extent on mere assertion, that the charges brought against the Hudson's Bay Company are, for the most part groundless.

To this gratifying announcement Mr. Hawes adds the intimation, that your Lordship nevertheless considers that the state and condition of the people under the government of the Company deserves to be further inquired into, and that means will therefore be taken for this object.

To this I can only reply, that if your Lordship will let me know the particular points on which you require further information, I shall be most ready to co-operate with you, and to supply any deficiency your Lordship may have found in my Report on the memorial which you submitted to my consideration, and to which I had flattered myself I had given a satisfactory answer; although the statements it contained were (so far as I am aware) unsustained by proof of any kind.

Trusting that, as the parties opposed to the Company are promulgating, through the press, statements calculated to mislead the public, and to prejudice the interests of the Company, your Lordship will come to an early decision on the subject,

I have, &c.  
(signed) J. H. Pelly.

## — No. 16.—

## — No. 16. —

Copy of a LETTER from *B. Hawes*, Esq., M.P., to Sir *J. H. Pelly*, Bart.

No. 16.

Sir,

Downing-street, 2 July 1847.

B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.,  
to Sir J. H. Pelly,  
Bart.,  
2 July 1847.

\* Page 52.

I AM directed by Earl Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated 21st \* ultimo, in which you express your readiness to supply any deficiency in your late Report upon the charges preferred by Mr. Isbister against the conduct of the Hudson's Bay Company towards the natives of Rupert's Land in North America. I am to inform you in answer, that Lord Grey has found no reason to complain of any deficiency in the completeness of the Report which you have furnished him; but, considering the Hudson's Bay Company to be the party against whom the charges have been made, his Lordship has thought it proper to endeavour to have your account of the Company's proceedings corroborated by some independent authority. This consideration has accordingly induced Lord Grey to direct the Governor of Canada to institute a full inquiry into the complaint against the Company, and his Lordship relies upon your affording to the Governor of that province every information, and giving every facility in furtherance of that inquiry.

I have, &amp;c.

(signed) *B. Hawes*.

## — No. 17. —

Copy of a LETTER from *A. K. Isbister*, Esq., to Earl *Grey*.

77, Jubilee-street, Mile-End-road,

9 August 1847.

No. 17.

IN pursuance of the intention expressed in my last communication to your Lordship, I have the honour to lay before you a full and detailed reply to the Report of the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, on the memorial from the natives of Rupert's Land, British North America.

A. K. Isbister,  
Esq., to Earl Grey,  
9 August 1847.

To meet the several statements of the Report, and the various character of the evidence adduced in its support, the accompanying papers have necessarily assumed a somewhat voluminous form; but I trust the importance of the interests at stake will plead our excuse for trespassing so largely on your Lordship's time and attention.

With a view to clearness and facility of reference, the observations of the reply have been classified under three heads: the first being devoted to an examination of the authorities adduced by Sir John Pelly in support of the statements of the Report, which I have no doubt will explain to your Lordship's satisfaction any discrepancy that may exist between the testimony there brought forward, and the statements of the memorial.

The second consists of a series of parallel observations on the Report, among which I have respectfully to request your Lordship's attention to the fourth, fifth and seventh; referring respectively to the connexion between the different missionary societies and the Hudson's Bay Company; the increase of the supply of spirituous liquors to the Indians since the renewal of the Company's license in 1837, and the fearful depopulation which is taking place among the native tribes subject to their jurisdiction, as well as to an important attestation, with which this section of the reply concludes, establishing the correctness of the tariff contained in the accompanying pamphlet,\* and which has been somewhat intemperately impugned in the Report.

\* See Page 85.

Under the third division, are thrown together, in the form of an Appendix, copious

copious extracts from the publications of every writer who (so far as I am aware) has had an opportunity of personally observing the condition of the natives of Rupert's Land; most of whom, it will be seen, have actually travelled through, and for a greater or less period resided in the territory, and not been merely casual or interested visitors to a particular locality. Among these will be found several extracts from the authorities cited in their own favour by the Company, which if they do not fully sustain the statements of the memorial, will, at least, establish their inefficiency as evidence against it.

The degree and character of the proof by which the grievances of the inhabitants of Rupert's Land are supported, will appear from the following recapitulation of the authorities cited in the course of the accompanying documents; which, it will be observed, range from the earliest history of the Company to the present time:—

	AUTHORITIES.		Opportunities of Observation.
1.	Mr. Robson - - - - -	1752	Six years in the Company's service.
2.	Mr. Umfreville - - - - -	1790	Fourteen ditto.
3.	Lieutenant Chappel, R.N. - - - - -	1817	Made two voyages to Hudson's Bay.
4.	Major Long, United States Army	1825	Visited the Red River colony and the adjacent country, in the course of an exploring expedition.
5.	Professor Keating - - - - -		ditto.
6.	J. C. Beltrami, Esq., late Judge of a Royal Court in Italy.	1828	- - Travelled through and resided several years in the Hudson's Bay territory.
7.	Sir John Richardson (in Captain Sir J. Franklin's Journey).	1823	- - ditto.
8.	Dr. Richard King - - - - -	1836	- - Several years in the service of the Hudson's Bay and North-west Companies.
9.	Mr. Ross Cox - - - - -	1831	Visited Fort Vancouver.
10.	Mr. Parker, American Missionary	1837	- - Travelled through a portion of the Oregon territory.
11.	Mr. Townsend (American) - - - - -	1838	Eate Chaplain at Fort Vancouver.
12.	Mr. Beaver (British) - - - - -	1838	13 years in the Company's service.
13.	Mr. Thomas Simpson, Chief Trader, Hudson's Bay Company	1843	ditto.
14.	Mr. Alexander Simpson, ditto - - - - -	1845	14 years in the Company's service.
15.	Captain Wilkes, United States Exploring Expedition.	1845	Visited Fort Vancouver.
16.	Sir Edward Belcher (British) - - - - -	1843	ditto.
17.	Testimony of retired Servants of the Company, now in England	From 1799 to 1844.	Resided for many years in various parts of the country.
18.	Extracts from the records of the Church Missionary and Wesleyan Societies, showing their non-connexion with the Hudson's Bay Company.		
19.	Extracts from the Returns of the Custom-house for 1847, showing an increase in the exportation of spirituous liquors to Hudson's Bay.		
20.	Petition and memorial from 1,000 of the natives of Rupert's Land, comprising, as far as can be ascertained, all those who have received the benefit of missionary instruction.		

Such an amount of confirmatory testimony will, I feel assured, satisfy your Lordship of the justice of those complaints which have been addressed to Her Majesty's Government from the inhabitants of the Hudson's Bay Company's territories, and justify the policy of introducing a healthier system; one more calculated to meet their wants and promote their interests, and more accordant with their own just rights, than that under which it is at present their misfortune to live.

I have, &c.

(signed) A. K. Isbister.

Enclosure

## Enclosure 1, in No. 17.

## LETTER of Sir John Pelly.

SIR John Pelly begins by acknowledging the receipt of a memorial, "signed by certain persons calling themselves deputies from the natives of Rupert's Land," a fact he would, no doubt, willingly dispute if he could; and proceeds to describe, in the most circumstantial manner, the origin and object of the petition referred to in the memorial, which he charitably imputes to the efforts of certain disaffected parties at Red River, who, desirous of setting aside the Company's charter, have taken this means to effect their object. Who these parties are, he nowhere clearly explains, describing them in some parts of the Report as "settlers at the Red River;" in others, as the "leaders of the half-breeds;" and again, as certain unknown persons, subjects of the United States, in confederacy with them.

How he comes to know so much of the nature and origin of a petition he has never yet seen, and of the existence of which he was for the first time made aware through the memorial itself, he can himself best explain.

The letter of Mr. John M'Leod, one of the memorialists to the secretary of the Aborigines Protection Society, given in the Appendix, will perhaps throw some light on the source of Sir John Pelly's information, and serve to show how the Hudson's Bay Company ordinarily meet accusations of this nature.

The object of this confused and fallacious account of the petition is very obvious, but it will not answer the writer's purpose.\* The "leaders" of the half-breeds, by which it is presumed is meant the memorialists, happen to be all of British extraction, as are also many of the petitioners, and never trafficked or were engaged in trafficking furs, either at Red River or elsewhere. So far from being in confederacy with "American interlopers," they have never been, to their knowledge, so much as within the limits of the United States territory, and have no acquaintance with any subject of that country whatever; and with respect to the Indians, who are described as having never in any part of Rupert's Land manifested any symptoms of discontent against the Company, a considerable portion of the petitioners are of this class.

With respect to the "parade of an affected commiseration of the hard lot of the Indian population," with which the memorialists are charged, it will be seen in the course of the following observations to whom that imputation properly applies.

The array of authorities adduced in corroboration of the Report, though plausible and imposing, will not bear examination. The testimony of the Bishop of Montreal, so far as his personal observation extended, is entitled to every respect, and is willingly accepted by the memorialists. The only reference, however, which is made to the Hudson's Bay Company in the course of the voluminous extracts from his Journal, given in the Appendix to the Report, at all bearing on the subject of the memorial, is the following: "The Company dispose of their lands upon liberal terms, with a frontage along the river, and I think the uniform depth of a mile, with an understanding that till further arrangements take place, another mile is at the disposal of the owner for any benefits which he can derive from it. The liberality of the Company is also evinced in their permitting private traders to import goods in the Company's ships, although they, the Company, have stores of their own within the forts, in which articles of the same description are for sale."

The Company dispose of their lands at 12s. 6d. per acre, and private traders are permitted to import goods in the Company's ships at the rate of 9*l.* a ton, which is somewhat more than three times the average freight from London to China.

The object of the authors of the Report in multiplying the extracts descriptive of the missions of the Church Missionary Society at Red River, is very obvious; but they are reminded that these missions, of which the Bishop of Montreal speaks in terms of such high and deserved commendation, have been established and are entirely supported by the society itself, and have no more connexion with the Hudson's Bay Company than any other body that chooses to set up for itself a claim to the fruits of other people's exertions.

The history of these missions is identified with that of the Red River Settlement, and is briefly this: In 1811, the late Earl of Selkirk having obtained a grant of 100,000 acres from the Company, for the establishment of an agricultural colony, commenced a settlement on the Red River by conveying thither, at a considerable expense, several hundred families from various parts of Europe. These for many years formed the entire population of the colony, which was afterwards gradually increased by the influx of retired servants of the Company, with their half-caste families. In 1821 the Hudson's Bay Company received from the British Government their first license of exclusive trade, and under the provisions of that grant, it becoming incumbent on them to take some steps towards the introduction of civilization and Christianity among the Indians, a proposal was made to the Church Missionary Society to establish a mission among the Indians on the east side of the Rocky Mountains, which after some hesitation, on account of not being strictly in accordance with its objects, was accepted. This being the proper duty of the Company themselves, was indeed out of the province of a missionary society.

Under this arrangement, three missionaries were successively sent out by the society, and placed at the disposal of the Company, who, instead of placing them among the Indians, as had

See the account of  
Red River colony,  
by Thomas Simp-  
son, p. 13.

Sir J. H. Pelly's  
Letter to Lord  
Glenelg.—Papers  
relative to the Hud-  
son's Bay Company.

See License, *Ibid.*

Bishop of Mont-  
real's Journal.

\* The authors of the Petition are described as "the turbulent portion of the half-breeds, and mostly of Canadian origin."—Sir J. H. Pelly's Letter.

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Appendix, No. 5.  
and 33.

Bishop of Mont-  
real's Journal.

Letter of Sir John  
Pelly to Lord  
Glenelg.

The colony is only  
a few miles from  
the United States'  
boundary.

had been proposed, stationed the whole three at Lord Selkirk's Settlement at the Red River. Two Catholic missionaries, sent up from Canada by the Bishop of Quebec, by whom the expenses of their establishment were defrayed, were disposed of in the same way. The senior Protestant missionary received for some time an allowance from the Company (which has now, however, been for several years discontinued) in addition to his stated salary from the society, and was dignified with the name of the "Company's Chaplain." The expenses of the different missions, however, have been at all times defrayed by the society itself. In this state matters continued till the year 1837, when the Company opened a negotiation with the Government for a renewal of their license. At this time there were at the small settlement at the Red River, two Church of England missionaries, four Protestant churches, five Protestant day-schools, and an academy for the instruction of the children of the better class of residents; also a Roman Catholic Bishop and several priests, and three or four schools for the settlers of that persuasion; all supported by their respective societies, but, as has been stated, stationed there for its own purposes by the Company; while in the territories under its own management beyond Red River, extending over an area considerably larger than all Europe, and inhabited by upwards of 50 native tribes of Indians, there was neither church, school nor mission of any denomination whatever. Shortly before this, however, (and observe the policy of the proceeding) the Company bought back the settlement from Lord Selkirk's executors; and when the proper time came, with a modesty peculiar to themselves, claimed as their own work what had been done at Red River before it came into their possession at all. The colony was therefore described as the Company's "principal agricultural settlement at the Red River;" (was there any other?) "established for the purpose of drawing thither the native Indians from all parts of the Company's territories, with a view to their civilization, and moral and religious improvement," through the instruction of "the Company's chaplains and schoolmasters." It was to this favoured region that the Bishop of Montreal paid a visit in the summer of 1845; his Lordship was altogether only 17 days in the colony, and was not called upon to inquire into the abuses of the Company's management, or the effects of their system of trade on the Indians in the interior, and from what has just been stated, it will be obvious that at Red River he had no opportunity of doing so had he been so inclined. At the same time, in speaking of the improvement that had taken place in the settlement, it is to be observed, that he nowhere attributes it to the Company, but, as will be seen in the following extract, is careful to assign it to the proper quarter, namely, the Church Missionary Society. "In all respects it is truly gratifying to observe how the condition and the habits of the Indian are bettered by the exertions made under the auspices of the society in his behalf."

The testimony of Captain Wilkes and Mr. Parker, is introduced by Sir John Pelly, with the remark, that "they will not be suspected of any partiality towards the Hudson's Bay Company," an opinion in which that gentleman will find but few to agree with him, as, unfortunately, there exists not only a very general suspicion of such partiality, but, as will be seen in the sequel, some very good reasons for a positive assurance on the point..

To show the true character and value of the testimony of these apparently disinterested witnesses, it will be necessary to state some particulars, throwing light upon the connexion between the Hudson's Bay Company and the American settlers in Oregon, which are not so familiar to the public of this country as they deserve.

At the time of the visits of Commodore Wilkes and Mr. Parker to Fort Vancouver, the management of the Company's business in that quarter was entirely in the hands of a Dr. M'Laughlin, who had for many years exercised an almost despotic sway over this district, and whose conduct has had more influence in deciding the fate of the country and its inhabitants than is generally known. An old *Nor'-wester*, he had acquired considerable influence before the union of the Companies, and had been trained up in the active and energetic, but unprincipled, system adopted by the North-west Company; by birth a French Canadian, his connexion with the United States was intimate and extensive; his dislike of English influence extreme.

Accordingly, when the enlightened plan of colonizing the Willamette mentioned in Mr. Thomas Simpson's "Narrative" was determined upon, a body of half-breeds and others was sent from Red River to locate there, but were neither allowed by him to do so, nor supplied with necessaries during their detention on the North side of the Columbia River, or for their journey back again; while at the same time American settlers had been credited by him to any extent at the Company's stores at Fort Vancouver, and their missionaries supplied with far more, and afforded much greater facilities than Mr. Beaver or any other English missionary ever possessed, as that gentleman himself witnesseth in his letter, quoted at p. 22, 23, of the Appendix to the Report.

Dr. M'Laughlin had appropriated for his own and his son's use the best mill-privilege and land in the settlement, which he had sagacity enough to foresee would rise much more rapidly in value under the American system of colonization, than if left to the more tardy process of British occupation. Accordingly, all his energies were directed to colonizing the territory with American subjects, with a view to the ultimate securing of the country to the United States.

It was in vain the Company remonstrated, and that Sir George Simpson countermanded; he had the reins in his hand, and carried out his original intentions. The consequences have been, the loss of Southern Oregon to this country, and his own retirement from the service, with a large and improving property, and a handsome pension from the Company. His first step on the adjustment of the long-agitated question of the North-west boundary, was, it need scarcely be told, a public declaration of his allegiance to the United States.

To

## THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 57

To this, although there may be but imperfect testimony in print, there are sufficient living witnesses even yet in England. Of the nature of the Company's influence, and the character, conduct and objects of the American missionaries, there is sufficient testimony in the works of Messrs. Wilkes, Parker and Beaver, as well as in the extracts given from Sir Edward Belcher's Narrative, Appendix, No. 2.

It would indeed be surprising if, under such circumstances, Messrs. Wilkes and Parker had spoken otherwise than favourably of the Hudson's Bay Company, to whom they and their countrymen were under such essential obligation. In relation to the Americans, that body has certainly earned the praise bestowed on it by Mr. Wilkes, of having "opened the way to future emigration, provided the means necessary for the success of emigrants, and rendered its peaceful occupation an easy and cheap task." That the United States have so found it, the history of Oregon and of Red River affords abundant evidence.

How far these impartial witnesses have been swayed by personal and political considerations, will best appear by comparing their testimony with that of Sir Edward Belcher and Mr. Beaver, who were at Vancouver about the same time, but, having the misfortune to be British subjects, experienced and have borne testimony to a very different reception.

The two remaining authorities on Sir John Pelly's list are Messrs. Simpson and Dunn, to both of whom exception might justly be taken as witnesses in the case, being both servants of the Company, and therefore obviously interested parties. The former of these, indeed, Mr. Thomas Simpson, was at the time he penned his Narrative, himself a partner of the Company, and looking forward to promotion to a higher grade. His publication was avowedly written in opposition to some statements of Dr. King's, and it is clear also from various coincidences of expression, that he had before him at the time the Reports of Sir John Pelly and Sir George Simpson, whose statements he endeavoured to bear out by an imposing array of various acts of benevolence towards the natives, in which, by the way, he himself generally figures as the principal actor. The Report is copiously interspersed with corroborative references, which on examination turn out to be almost entirely extracts from Mr. Simpson's work, which is parcelled out into not less than 17 different sections, in order to render the array of authorities more imposing. Unfortunately, however, for the Report, and for Mr. Simpson's own credit as an authority, several letters of his written to his brother about the very time he was engaged in preparing his Narrative for the press, have been published in his "Life," a few extracts from which are here appended, in contrast with others from the publication cited in the Report.

### *EXTRACTS from Mr. Thomas Simpson's Narrative.*

"SINCE the coalition of the rival Companies, and the discharge of the noxious swarm of adventurers who, encouraged by the license of a hot opposition, overran and well-nigh ruined the country, the precepts of morality and order have been instilled into the minds of the aborigines by many officers of the Company. No stronger proof of the salutary effect of their injunctions can be adduced, than that while peace and decorum mark the general conduct of the Northern tribes, bloodshed, rapine and unbridled lust are the characteristics of the fierce hordes of Assiniboines, Piegan, &c., who are without the pale of the Company's influence and authority," p. 23.

"The Company's principal chaplain\* resides at their dépôt of Fort Vancouver, on the north side of the Columbia River, where agriculture, rearing of stock, and other commercial operations are prosecuted on a large scale.

"The same enlightened body has of late years liberally assisted American missionaries employed in instructing the dissolute maritime tribes, and in founding an American colony on the Willamette, a southern tributary of the Columbia, and has since conveyed across the mountains several Canadian priests, who, under the authority of the Bishop at Red River, are gone to form another British settlement on the shores of Puget's Sound,

### *EXTRACTS from Mr. Thomas Simpson's Letters.*

MR. THOMAS SIMPSON's testimony is introduced in the "Report," in the following terms:

"No man in the Company's service had such opportunities as he enjoyed of becoming acquainted with their management, and none was better able to appreciate its effects."

Very well.

"Viewing the service generally, I must candidly confess, judging from the actions of others, that its promises of happiness are hollow, while an awful fatality seems to overhang its retiring members; a punishment for the unprincipled and licentious lives they have led," p. 81.

"I fancy you will be taking to wife ere long, some dark-eyed senora. You would be a lucky fellow could you fall upon one with ingot enough to emancipate you from fur-trade thralldom. Wretchedness is the inevitable portion of all who remain too long in this service."

[The following extract is important, as showing the apprehension existing in the minds of the Company's agents of a diminution of their profits from the introduction of missionaries into the country. The kind and degree of encouragement likely to be held out to them under the circumstances, it will not be difficult to determine.]

"Three

\* The "principal Chaplain" here alluded to, is Mr. Beaver, who left the country in 1838, i. e. five years before Mr. Simpson wrote.

Mr. T. Simpson's Narrative—continued.

Sound, the nucleus of a future empire in the far West.

"In the countries of the Columbia and New Caledonia (*a*), to the westward of the Great Rocky Mountain chain, the missionary labours promise considerable success.

"Besides extensive purchases of grain and provisions, for their transport and other service, the Company annually expends large sums at Red River in various works of public utility, such as experimental farming, erecting churches and other buildings, endowing schools, affording medical aid gratis to the poor, encouraging domestic manufactures, and maintaining an armed police, dispensing justice, and in contributing to the support of two Protestant clergymen, of a Roman Catholic Bishop and three priests from Canada. To compensate this heavy outlay, the Company has hitherto derived no return, for the occasional sale of lands does not even defray the cost of the survey, they being in most instances bestowed gratis, though regularly purchased from the Indians, and the fur trade of the surrounding country has been long ago ruined by the colony.

"Governor Simpson has long endeavoured by arguments and rewards to excite an exportation to England of hides, tallow, flax, hemp and wool for the benefit of the settlers, but with little success. Under the Company's fostering care, a population of 5,000 souls has been nurtured, and a comfortable retreat has been provided for such of its retired officers and servants as prefer spending the evening of life with their native families in this oasis of the desert, to return to the countries of their nativity. I cannot pass over without particular notice the admirable boarding schools established by the Rev. Mr. Jones, where about 60 youth of both sexes, the intelligent and interesting offspring of the Company's officers, are trained up in European accomplishments, and in the strictest principles of religion."

These extracts render further comment on the value of Mr. Simpson's testimony unnecessary.

Mr. Dunn's book was written with the same view as his letters to the "Times" newspaper; viz. to draw the attention of this country to the value of the Oregon, and the encroachments of the Americans in it, and neither his position nor temperament admitted of his telling the whole truth. Had he written his work himself, and had he not been compelled, according to his own statement, to burn his journal at Fort Vancouver, by a regulation of the Company, prohibiting their servants from retaining any record of what passes in the country, his "History of the Oregon" would have been a much more valuable authority than it is.

OBSERVATIONS on the HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY'S REPORT.

REPORT of the Hudson's Bay Company on  
the Memorial of the Natives of *Rupert's Land.*

1. It is proper to observe in the outset, that there is an ambiguity calculated to mislead in the term "natives," as used in the memorial, which is sometimes employed to denote half-breeds, or persons of mixed race, and sometimes the Indians or aboriginal inhabitants. In the Report it is applied exclusively to the latter.

That discontent and misery prevail to an unparalleled extent among the natives of *Rupert's Land*, is an assertion wholly destitute

Mr. T. Simpson's Letters—continued.

"Three Wesleyan missionaries have come in from Lac la Pluie and the Saskatchewan, and furs have fallen 15 to 20 per cent. in price; ominous signs these, saying plainly, 'Make hay while the sun shines.'"*Ibid.* p. 357.

You have no idea of the curious position the Company holds here. The land of the colony and the right of the government is Lord Selkirk's, by grant from the Company; and until 1826, the executors of the late Earl had a separate establishment, with a governor of their own; but since then, their affairs have been managed exclusively by the Hudson's Bay Company, the Hudson's Bay factor has been their governor, and the Hudson's Bay fort their place of business; but they sell the land at 12*s. 6d.* per acre, and pocket the money; a very cheap and convenient method, you will say. It is true they keep about a score of policemen in pay (*b*); but this force is a mere nonentity, and the Hudson's Bay Company have virtually to act as judge, jury and gaoler in his Lordship's colony. The only good thing I see in the matter is, that they give me a salary of 25*l.* for keeping their accounts."—P. 93.

"Our plans of colonization are so wild and unfortunate, and the Company's business is tortured by so many and such strange changes, that as a man of business I feel but little satisfaction in it. We have shepherds, shepherdesses and dogs numberless come out. But the wolves have been ravaging the flocks; the tallow trade is broken up, and the experimental farm be-devilled; all that sort of thing, to be permanent, must be done by the settlers themselves; but the business here is tagged together in the most strange and unsatisfactory manner.

"We have abundant crops and provisions from the plains this year; money and meat are abundant; and that is all that can be said of the place; discomfort, isolation, prodigality, idleness and immorality, with its concomitant pleasures, complete the picture."

OBSERVATIONS and Statements corroborating the Memorial.

1. The distinction which is drawn between the native Indians and their half-caste offspring is in itself unobjectionable, but the inference it is afterwards attempted to found on this distinction, namely, that the half-breeds are, from the circumstance of their mixed parentage, divested of the rights inherent in the aboriginal inhabitants, cannot be admitted. It is at variance with the established usage in Canada and the United States, where the half-castes are in every case admitted,

# THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

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Report—continued.

Observations—continued.

tute of truth. The natives have never, in that extensive territory, manifested symptoms of discontent; on the contrary, they entertain the most cordial feelings towards the Company, whom they regard as their benefactors, and without whose assistance they know that they would be deprived, not only of many comforts which they now enjoy, but of the means of sustaining life.

Some of the half-breeds of Red River Settlement are discontented with the measures which the Company have found it necessary to adopt for the purpose of protecting their own interests and also those of the colony. But their discontent is groundless, as, with even moderate industry, they have within their reach more of the comforts of life than are enjoyed by persons of their station in almost any part of the world.

This is not the place to discuss the merits of the Company's charter, the validity of which is unquestionable, and as to their exclusive privilege of trade (improperly called a monopoly), it has been sufficiently proved by dear-bought experience, that without such privilege the natives would be exposed to great moral degradation and physical suffering.

mitted to full participation in the privileges of their Indian connexions. Rupert's Land, where the half-breeds are but too often abandoned by their unnatural white parents, and cast upon the charity of their Indian relations, is the last place where such a distinction ought to be put in force. The statement that the natives have never manifested any symptoms of discontent towards the Company, is best refuted by the evidence of the petition itself. There are but 571 native families (Indian and half-castes) in the settlement (a), and out of these upwards of (a) Bishop of 1,000 persons have signed the petition, a large proportion of whom are the Christian Indians attached to the missions of the Church Missionary Society.

When the Company describe the Indians as dependent on them for the comforts and necessities of life, they forget to state that these comforts are of their own introducing, and well paid for by the Indians. If the half-breeds of Red River really possessed more of the comforts of life than are usually enjoyed by persons of their station (which is very far from being admitted), it would furnish no argument against their seeking to improve their condition.

With respect to the charter, this is certainly not the place to discuss its merits; they have been very satisfactorily discussed elsewhere.

2. This is no answer to the statement of the memorialists, and is besides not the way to estimate the advantage taken of the natives in trade. The capital of 400,000*l.* (b) is well known to be fictitious. Mr. Alexander Simpson, himself a partner of the Company, states their profits to average 100,000*l.* on a return of about 200,000*l.*, and an outlay which, according to official returns, does not amount to one-fifth of that sum.

3. In the Company's License (c) of exclusive trade of 1821, there is an express provision for the civilization and Christianization of the Indians, the obligation of which extends to the territory claimed under the charter of King Charles the Second (which is now, however, acknowledged on all hands to be illegal). The last sentence of this paragraph, respecting the annual expense incurred by the Company in the civilization of the natives, requires proof.

4. It is as clearly the duty as it would eventually be the interest of the Company, to encourage the Indians to settle to agriculture; but it is unfortunately also their interest, and that a more immediate one, to obtain furs, and to the latter the former is invariably sacrificed (d).

It is perfectly gratuitous to say that the Indians cannot be induced to cultivate the ground, and equally so that the Company have made any attempts to break them into the employment of agriculture (e). Wherever the experiment has been made, as, for example, at Red River by the Church Missionary Society, and at Norway House by the Wesleyan Society, it has been completely

(b) Pamphlet, Appendix, 28, 29,  
30, 31, 32.

(c) See License, and  
an extract from Sir  
John Pelly's Letter  
to Lord Glenelg,  
containing an ex-  
plicit admission  
of what is here  
repudiated.  
(Observations,  
page 68.)

(d) Appendix,  
*passim.*

(e) Testimony of  
retired servants.

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## Report—continued.

## Observations—continued.

break them into the employment of agriculture in the parts of the territory most suitable to that purpose, those experiments have not been so successful as could have been wished; nor will this result surprise those who know how difficult it is to overcome the instinctive repugnance of the North American Indians to any employment requiring the application of steady and persevering industry.

(f) Appendix; 7, 8, 9.

The distinction which the memorialists draw between what the Company do themselves and what they do through others, though verbally correct, conveys a substantial misrepresentation. In instructing the natives, and in conducting their own business, the Company adopt one uniform rule, namely, that of employing the instrument fittest for their purposes; and on this principle they have employed the agency of the Church Missionary Society and the Wesleyan Missionary Society for the conversion of the natives, and of a Roman Catholic Missionary Society for the religious instruction of that portion of the mixed race who, being of French descent, have been brought up in the faith of the Church of Rome.

From near the Rocky Mountains in the west, to Rupert's River in the east, wherever the peculiar circumstances of the country would permit, and there appeared a fair prospect that missionary labours would be attended with success, there at some central point, from which various parts of the surrounding country could be visited, a missionary has been placed, and where practicable, a school established and a chapel erected. Those establishments are necessarily few, because as each of them must be considered the nucleus of a future village or settlement, no locality can properly be selected for such a purpose that does not possess resources available for the progressive enlargement of the establishment, and unfortunately such localities are far from numerous in Rupert's Land. In the greater part of the territory, the few natives whom it maintains are scattered in single families over an immense extent of surface, and the means of subsistence are so deficient, that to collect the inhabitants together in any numbers, would be to expose them to certain death from starvation; the Company, therefore, feel it incumbent on them to take care, that in attempting to remedy one evil, they do not create another and a greater evil.

The Company bear willing testimony to the zeal and perseverance of the Church Missionary Society, but their services are not gratuitous, as stated in the memorial; all the societies that send missionaries to the Company's territories receive assistance from them; the Wesleyan missionaries are maintained, and provided with the means of conveyance from place to place at the Company's expense.

The inhabitants of Red River Settlement amount to somewhat more than 5,000; of these rather more than half profess the Roman Catholic religion, and are under the spiritual charge of a Bishop, assisted by several priests.

There is completely successful. Were the Company to make an attempt in other parts of the country, it would be followed by a like gratifying result. It is one of the effects of the vicious system under which the fur trade is conducted, that the Indians cannot, if they wish, settle to agricultural pursuits. During the summer season their time is wholly occupied in procuring and storing up provisions for the use of the traders at the forts (f), who are as averse to the cultivation of the soil as the Indians themselves; and during the winter in procuring furs; both of which pursuits are incompatible with habits of agriculture.

The claims set up by the Company to the fruits of the exertions of the Church Missionary Society, on the ground that what is not done by them is done through them, has been already noticed and answered. The following extract from the balance-sheet of the society for 1845-6 will, it is hoped, set this point at rest:

## NORTH-WEST AMERICAN MISSION:

	£. s. d.
Expenditure	1,711 9 7
Contributions received and expended there	179 12 -
Supplies to the Missionaries	141 9 4
Two Outfits	107 8 4
Two Passages (in Company's ship), and Travelling Expenses	41 9 -
Freight, Shipping Insurance, &c.	81 - 3
	<hr/> £. 2,262 8 6

It will be seen from the above table of expenses incurred by the missionaries, and entirely defrayed by the society, that the Hudson's Bay Company, instead of contributing to their support, as they represent, actually derive a considerable profit from their connexion with them.

The expenditure of the Wesleyan Society on their missions in Hudson's Bay for the last year, as shown by their annual Report, was 991 l. 3s. 10d. There are four Wesleyan missionaries in Rupert's Land, each at a salary of 25 l. a year, with a smaller allowance for their wives and families if married, which they all are not, altogether amounting at farthest to not much more than 200 l. per annum. This leaves on an average between 700 l. and 800 l. a year for their maintenance; yet it is asserted in the Report, that the Wesleyan missionaries are maintained and provided with the means of conveyance from place to place at the Company's expense.

The Roman Catholic missionaries are in the same way supported by their respective societies (g).

The statement that occurs a little before, that the Company have established villages, churches and schools (h) at every practicable spot between the Rocky Mountains and Hudson's Bay, is a pure fiction from beginning to end.

The list of the churches and schools at Red River is perfectly correct, as also the statement, that at one of those schools three of the memorialists were educated. It is forgotten, however, to state, that these churches and schools are in no way connected

(g) Appendix; 5, 33.

(h) Appendix, 19, 15, and Pamphlet.

## Report—continued.

There are four Roman Catholic schools, four Protestant churches, and nine Protestant schools, attended by nearly 500 scholars; at one of which, it may be remarked, three of the memorialists were educated.

It is not correct to say, that the Indians have been consigned to the care of the Company (*i*). They stand in no nearer relation to the Company than the aborigines of other colonies do to the British Government; and it may not perhaps be considered unreasonable to call upon the memorialists, who are so ready to depreciate the efforts made by the Hudson's Bay Company under every disadvantage for the civilization of the natives of Rupert's Land, to show that greater efforts have been made for the same purpose in other colonies, even under the most favourable circumstances of soil, climate and native habits. Were such a comparison instituted, the Company would have no reason to fear the result.

5. The charter, as has been already stated in No. 3, had no such objects as those here stated, and if it had, some of them at least could not be effected, by reason of the obstacles which nature has opposed to their accomplishment.

The spot best adapted to the purpose of agriculture in all the Company's territories, is where the settlement has been formed at the confluence of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers, and that is 700 miles from the nearest port, which is ice-bound nine months out of the twelve. The only medium of transport that the Company ever can afford is that which is now in use, namely, the lakes and rivers with which it abounds.

How the neglect of such improvements should add to the aggrandizement of the Company, does not readily appear. The Company are of opinion that, if they were practicable, they would tend greatly to their advantage.

6. To the charge, that the Company have resumed the trade in spirituous liquors with the Indians, and the insinuations which accompany it, the Company give the most indignant denial. The very terms in which the charge is couched, afford a striking instance of that recklessness of assertion which pervades the memorial.

The Company never entered into any obligation with the British Government to discontinue trading in ardent spirits with the natives of Rupert's Land, previously to their obtaining a renewal of their license; the obligation extends only to the country situated to the north and west of their own territories. Nevertheless, they have abolished the trade over both regions, and if anything were needed to prove their sincerity in this matter, they might appeal to the facts, that, by their influence,

nected with the Hudson's Bay Company, and that the memorialists paid for what education they received at the rate of 30*l.* per annum.

It is calculated to give a very erroneous idea of the relation in which the Company stand to the natives of Rupert's Land, to compare it with that of the British Government to the aborigines of other colonies. The Government of this country has nowhere, at any time, exacted the labour and undivided energies of a whole people for its exclusive benefit and aggrandizement. As regards the "licensed territory," the Company were invested with the right of exclusive trade over it solely on public grounds; for they cannot even claim the merit of having established the fur trade in this part of the country. This was done by the traders from Canada, who, by the superior influence of the Hudson's Bay Company, were deprived of the legitimate reward of their industry and enterprise.

(i) The Hudson's Bay Company undertake to civilize the Indians in return for their exclusive privileges of trade.

5. The obligation to improve the country entrusted to their management so as to fit it for a future colony, is inseparable from the condition on which the Company hold it. It is very clear, however, from this statement, that they neither wish nor intend to improve it.

The Red River Settlement (*k*) is not the only spot adapted to the purpose of agriculture within the territories claimed by the Company, and was, moreover, as has been already stated, not established by them, but by Lord Selkirk.

(i) Appendix, No. 8 & 9.

The neglect to improve the means of transport adds to the aggrandizement of the Company in more ways than one. As long as the country remains as it now is, and, as it is obviously their interest to keep it—a trackless wilderness—not only is it impassable to rival traders, but impervious to inquiry. Were a commission for this purpose to proceed at this moment to Rupert's Land, it is very evident that, unless accompanied by persons familiar with the country, it could not proceed a single step without the assistance of the Company, and, even if it could, would be anticipated and frustrated at every point by them.

6. With respect to the importation of spirituous liquors into Rupert's Land, it can be very easily ascertained, by a comparison of the annual returns of the Custom-house, whether or not it is on the increase. According to Sir George Simpson (*l*), the annual exports to the country up to the year 1837 (when the Company applied for the renewal of their license), did not exceed on the average 43 puncheons, or 3,612 gallons, for the supply of the whole of the Company's territories east of the Rocky Mountains. This last year there were exported to Hudson's Bay alone 9,075 gallons of spirits of various kinds, showing an increase of nearly three-fold, exclusive of what is exported to the Oregon territory, and supplied from Canada; which may be estimated at as much more (*m*). Besides this, there is now a distillery at the Red

(l) Sir George Simpson's Letter.

(m) See also Appendix, No. 11, 12, 13 & 14.

Report—*continued.*Observations—*continued.*

influence, the settlers at the Willamette and the Russians at Sitka, have been prevailed upon to adopt the same course.

At a few of the Company's posts, near Red River, small quantities of spirits are occasionally given as presents to the natives who frequent those parts. The Company have been compelled to adopt this expedient in self-defence, there being no alternative but to surrender the trade in that quarter entirely to American interlopers, and their confederates, the traders of the half-breeds at Red River Settlement, who barter spirits for furs in their clandestine dealings with the natives. This is an example of the effects of competition, and it may serve to convey an idea, though a very imperfect one, of what would result were the whole of the Company's territories equally accessible to adventurers of every description, having no stake in the country, and outbidding one another in the scramble for furs. Rum would become the universal medium of exchange with the natives, and the most liberal distribution would carry off the prize.

(n) See License.

(o) Appendix,  
No. 14.

(p) Appendix, No.  
10, 11, and Testi-  
mony of retired  
Servants.

(q) Appendix, 21,  
22, 23, 24, 25, 26  
& 27.

(r) Appendix,  
*passim.*

7. If the present resources of the country are diminishing, it is not by the demand of the fur trade, but by the wanton destruction of animal life which, great as is, would be still greater were it not checked by the influence of the Company's officers and servants; and were it true that the larger portion of the native population can no longer find subsistence, their numbers would diminish; whereas, according to the best information that can be obtained, they are said to be increasing.

8. The missionaries are not excluded from the more northern parts of the country by the Company, who have no power to prevent their going thither but by the obvious impossibility of their doing any good if they went.

That some of the natives of those parts are occasionally reduced to great distress, is too true; but this is not so much owing to the scarcity of the means of subsistence as to the want of foresight and habits of indolence, the active hunter being always able to maintain himself. Were it not for the relief afforded by the Company's servants, this distress would be greatly aggravated. Whenever the Company's posts are situated in the poorer parts of the country, provisions are sent thither from districts where there is abundance. The means of subsistence, instead of being exhausted, are thus equalized, and the distribution of the stores so collected often saves the Indians from those extremities of famine which the memorialists so charitably impute to the presence of the fur trader.

Red River Settlement, the quantity supplied from which it is impossible to ascertain.

It is not easy to conceive what can induce the Company to deny that they ever entered into any obligation with the British Government to abolish the trade in ardent spirits previous to the renewal of their license in 1842. In the original grant of 1821, there is as plain and specific provision for this purpose as the language will admit (n). (See also, "Observations."

It is admitted that the issue of ardent spirits has been resumed in the neighbourhood of Red River, but this is justified on the plea of the injury that would otherwise arise to their trade in this quarter.

There can be no more conclusive proof than this, that the distribution of spirituous liquors, where discontinued at all, has been nowhere discontinued on principle (o). It shows, also, how readily the Company will sacrifice the acknowledged interests of the natives to the slightest consideration of gain. "This is an example of the effects of competition," say they; and to give force to their singular argument, exemplify those effects by themselves engaging in the trade. The assertion, that the half-breeds at Red River barter spirits in their clandestine traffic with the natives, carries with it its own refutation. It is very clear that they could not supply intoxicating liquors to the Indians, unless they obtained them in the first place from the Company.

7. The memorialists are not singular in attributing the diminished resources of the country to the presence of the fur traders (p), who discourage agriculture, and depend entirely on the provisions collected for their support by the Indians. When the authors of the Report say that the Indians are increasing in numbers, they say what they know to be untrue (q). Their referee, Mr. Thomas Simpson, nowhere states that "they are increasing;" he speaks only of the single tribe of Chippewyans. It is but too certain, on the contrary, that the native population throughout the country is fearfully decreasing.

8. Whether the Company have the power of excluding missionaries from the northern districts or not, it is very certain they have done so, as in the case of Mr. Evans, who was not permitted to establish a mission in Athabasca. Mr. Cockrane also met with great opposition in the formation of the Indian mission at Red River.

If the distress to which the Indians are often reduced be attributable to their own want of foresight and habits of indolence (r), how is it that this distress is always aggravated in proportion to the length and intimacy of their connexion with the Company? The provisions which are sent from one district to another, as described in the Report, are for the use of the residents at the forts, who have rarely enough for their own consumption in such cases, much less any superfluity to dispense to the Indians, who are not in the least degree benefited by the arrangement.

Whether the articles supplied by the Company to the Indians are of the first necessity or not, will be best seen from the articles themselves,

# THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 63

## Report—continued.

The goods supplied to the Indians, instead of being worthless, as the memorialists represent them, are almost entirely articles of the first necessity; and the very moderate profit realized by the Company is a proof that the prices are not exorbitant.

9. Migratory pursuits are the essential condition of Indian life in the northern regions, which, if inhabited at all, must be inhabited by hunters and fishers, leading a precarious life, as, owing to the rigour of the climate, no subsistence can be obtained from the soil to the north of the 54th parallel of latitude. It would no doubt be desirable to wean the natives of such a climate from their wandering habits, and transplant them to a more genial region; but has it ever occurred to the memorialists to ask themselves the question, " how this is to be accomplished?"

Many of the natives, however, have good leather tents, and all might probably have them if they were industrious. If they go half naked, it certainly is not owing to the exorbitant prices demanded for the clothes furnished by the Company; and even if they should get some things cheaper than they now do, were the fur trade thrown open (which is not admitted), that would afford but a poor compensation for the evils which competition would assuredly bring in its train, and of which the records of the Colonial Office contain abundant evidence.

It is very disadvantageous to the Company to supply them with goods on credit, but it is the unavoidable consequence of an improvidence inherent in Indian nature. It has been found impossible to alter the system without subjecting the natives to great suffering; indeed, in many cases, to almost certain death. The attempt has been repeatedly made by cancelling their debts, and paying them in the spring for the produce of their winter hunts; but it has always been found that in the fall of the year they must either be supplied with a fresh outfit, or be left without the means either of protecting themselves from the inclemency of the climate, or providing food during the winter.

The attack upon the Company's officers is equally unjust and malignant; there is no class of men who have more frequent calls upon their benevolence, or who answer such calls more readily. In point of mental and moral cultivation, they are at least equal to those of their own rank in this country; and to say that their deity is gold, to obtain which they trample down Christianity and benevolence, is as gross a calumny as ever was uttered.

10. The enterprising natives here alluded to, are settlers at Red River of mixed race, and the Company, who are their best customers, afford them every possible assistance in exporting their produce, and importing their supplies under proper regulations; but furs, which are no part of their produce, must be excepted. Such furs as they hunt themselves are purchased by the Company, but trafficking with the Indians cannot be permitted. Their argument on this point is quite untenable. The circumstance of their being born in the country may entitle them to call themselves natives, but it neither conveys to them any privileges belonging or supposed to belong to the aboriginal inhabitants, nor does it divest them of the character of British subjects, all of whom are precluded by the Company's

## Observations—continued.

themselves (s), and the same remark will apply to the very moderate profits they profess to realize from the trade. (s) See Tariff in Pamphlet, and Appendix, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32.

9. It is not correct to say that the soil of the northern parts of the fur territories is incapable of cultivation (t); good crops of barley, oats and potatoes, and even wheat, have been raised on the banks of Mackenzie's River as far north as the Arctic Circle. (t) Appendix, No. 8 & 9.

The evils of the competition in the fur trade were due entirely to the lawless and unprincipled character of those engaged in it (u), and the absence of law and authority in the country. It is not just that the Indians should be made to suffer for the misconduct of the traders. (u) Appendix, No. 33.

The debt system is imposed upon the natives as a stimulus to their industry. Were they not kept in debt, they would gradually fall off from the forts, and relapse into their original state of independence.

The memorialists can have no interest in wantonly aspersing the character of the Company's officers, who are their own fathers. The sentiments which they have considered it their painful duty to express on this head are but too amply corroborated in the Appendix (x).

(x) Appendix, No. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20.

10. Against this statement there is that of the petitioners (y), that the Company, instead of affording the half-breed merchants any assistance in exporting their produce, throw every impediment in their way, lest, by being placed in a position of independence, they should acquire too much influence over their countrymen. As to the arguments that the half-breeds do not inherit the rights of their maternal ancestors, that has been already disposed of. (y) See Petition and Instructions.

The covenants here spoken of are not the original contracts of the settlers, whose chief subject of complaint has always been that the Company refuse to give them any legal title to their lands (z). The land-deed\* which accompanies the Report has only recently been prepared, and is now in the course of being \*Vide copy of Land Deed at p. 45.

Report—*continued.*

Company's charter from trafficking in furs within its limits, without a license from the Company, and the Red River settlers are additionally bound, by the covenants under which they hold their lands, to abstain from such traffic.

11. Considerable quantities of furs procured in the Company's territories, by illicit traffic, are annually conveyed in a clandestine manner to the United States. In one instance the offending party was detected and the furs seized, but instead of their being forfeited, as they might lawfully have been, a fair price was paid for them by the agents of the Company; but there is no instance on record of any person having been imprisoned for such an offence, nor are the Company aware that any application for redress in such cases has ever been made to the local courts.

12. The Company entertain no fears for the preservation of the public peace at the Red River Settlement. The settlers have bound themselves to maintain it, and there is every reason to believe that the great majority of them will fulfil their obligations. Should any act otherwise, they must take the consequences.

If the Red River hunters trespass on American ground, the American Government may lawfully warn them off, and prevent them from so doing. That, however, ought not to be considered as a misfortune; for if they understood their true interest, they would abandon the chase and apply themselves solely to agriculture, which would abundantly supply them with the means of living comfortably. They would thus lead a life of less excitement, and their energies and hopes would be directed to more civilized pursuits.

From the manner in which the memorialists express themselves, it might be supposed that the Company lay claim to the proceeds of the buffalo hunts. No supposition, however, could be more erroneous; and as to the charge of distraining and imprisonment, that has been already disposed of as far as furs are concerned, as has also the claim of the half-breeds to be considered the original owners of the soil. With respect to the buffalo hunting, there has never been any restriction whatever.

The Company characteristically take credit to themselves for not claiming the proceeds of the buffalo hunt. Considering that the hunting-grounds are situated entirely within the United States' territory, and, therefore, beyond their jurisdiction, this extraordinary liberality cannot fail to be duly appreciated by the Red River colonists. It may not be out of place, however, to inquire here how the Hudson's Bay Company, with a charter of "unquestionable validity," under which they might lawfully have claimed the country watered by the Red River and its tributaries, have permitted nearly the whole of this fine territory to pass without remonstrance into the possession of the United States, just as by the treachery of their superintendent in Oregon, and the culpable concealment of the discoveries of their agents, they have lost the best part of that beautiful country also to Great Britain. The loss to the nation of these extensive and valuable tracts is but one, and that the least of the evils

Observations—*continued.*

being forced upon the Red River colonists, many of whom have very properly refused to sign it.

11. The nature of this assertion does not admit of anything but assertion in answer, for which see Petition and Instructions.

12. The opinions expressed in this paragraph, as well as throughout the Report, show a low and imperfect estimate of the question at issue.

The injustice of depriving the natives of their accustomed privilege of hunting the buffalo, without which it is not easy to see how they can subsist, is not once considered. The only answer to their well-founded remonstrance against this unjust and cruel deprivation, is an injunction to apply themselves solely to agriculture at Red River. Suppose this done, how are they to clothe themselves and families from the produce of their farms, for which they can find no market? The chase of the buffalo is not resorted to so much from choice as from necessity, the skins of these animals forming necessary articles of clothing to all the inhabitants of the colony, while the dried meat, pemican and tallow, collected during the season of hunting, form more or less the dependence of most of the native families during the winter, and meet at all times with a ready market in the settlement. In consequence of the restriction to which the Red River hunters are now subjected, the recommendation of the Report has been, in a great measure, carried out, and none have been greater sufferers from it than the Company themselves, who have this year been obliged to charter an additional ship to Hudson's Bay with provisions, to enable them to carry on their business, in consequence of the failure of the usual supply from the colony.

# THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 65

Report—*continued.*

Observations—*continued.*

evils which have resulted from the management of the country being entrusted to the Company.

The numerous and interesting inhabitants of these territories, notwithstanding their strong attachment to the British Government, and their hereditary claims on its protection, have, with the soil on which they were born, been cruelly abandoned to a power they have always regarded with feelings of aversion and abhorrence (a).

13. When the memorialists say that the ignorance and barbarism, the crimes and sufferings of the natives are ascribable to the Hudson's Bay Company, they make one of those extravagant assertions that carry with them their own refutation. Nothing is more obviously the interest of the Company (supposing them to be swayed by no higher considerations), than to prevent crime and sufferings, and to promote peace among the natives. This is the course which their servants are uniformly directed to pursue, and which has produced the happiest results.

The attempt made to invalidate the testimony of Sir George Simpson, will not answer the purpose of the memorialists, nor is the evidence of Mr. Alexander Simpson admissible in this case. That gentleman, at the time when the book referred to was published, was smarting under the rejection of an exorbitant and groundless claim, and stood towards the Company in the relation of a discontented servant. The *animus* of his publication may be gathered from the facts, that he suppressed the most material parts of his correspondence with the Company, and excluded from the quotations which he made from Mr. Thomas Simpson's work every sentence that spoke favourably of the Company. To Mr. Thomas Simpson's work (which it may be remarked had been published previously under the superintendence of Mr. Alexander Simpson), the Company willingly appeal, and some extracts from that work are subjoined to this paper, which, so far from corroborating the statements of the memorialists, show them to be without foundation. No man in the Company's service has such opportunities as he enjoyed of becoming acquainted with their management, and none was better able to appreciate its effects.

The Company consider the opinions expressed in this paragraph to be as erroneous as the statements on which they profess to be founded have been found to be. They are of opinion that the policy which they pursue is wise and salutary; and of that policy, it is an essential feature that their intercourse with the natives should be marked by a regard to their welfare, from which their own interests are inseparable. It is not true that their sole aim is avowedly to draw the greatest possible revenue from the country;

(a) See Testimony of Major Long, Appendix, No. 35.

13. It has already been explained how, with a positive interest in the welfare and prosperity of the natives, the Company, impelled by a desire of immediate gain, have brought ruin and impoverishment upon many of those tribes with whom they have come in contact. Their agents are dispersed over the country, with one single aim and one single duty, namely, to procure furs. To ameliorate the condition of the native population forms no part of their instructions, nor is considered as coming within their province, and is accordingly left for those who have a taste for such occupations.

The relation in which the Indian stands towards the Company, is that of the slave to his owner. Just as it is the interest of the slave-holder that his bondsman should be well fed, well clothed, and possess health and strength to labour for his master's profit, so is it the interest of the Company that the Indian should enjoy every physical comfort his condition and circumstances will admit, as he becomes thereby a more valuable and efficient instrument for their aggrandizement. They have not, it is true, like the slave-holders of America, passed laws against education to perpetuate that ignorance which is the common aim of both, and indeed the essential condition of their rule. That object has been better attained by debarring the Indians from every civilizing influence, and leaving them to educate themselves. And thus have these unhappy beings been for centuries the prey of a succession of needy adventurers, who have made a market of their necessities,\* and speculated upon their ignorance and imbecility.

The fur trade, from its nature, must constantly be diminishing, and can only be kept at a uniform standard by increased exertion on the part of the hunters, the result of which is, the gradual impoverishment of the country, and the ultimate extinction of those animals on which the natives depend for subsistence. Hence, the yearly recurring famine, from which to a people ignorant of agriculture, there are no means of escape, and the train of unnatural and revolting crimes to which such suffering stimulates the savage.

These and many other evils, the fruits of the fatal and disastrous connexion which has so long subsisted between the Hudson's Bay Company

\* The following extract from one of Mr. Thomas Simpson's Letters, who is described in the Report as so familiar with the working of the Company's system, will illustrate the observations in the text. Writing to his brother, he thus announces the introduction of missionaries into the country, "Three Wesleyan missionaries have come in for Lake La Pluie and the Saskatchewan; and furs have fallen 15 to 20 per cent. Ominous signs, these, saying plainly, 'Make hay while the sun shines.' —*Life and Travels of Thomas Simpson.*

Report—continued.Observations—continued.

country; their views are directed not to temporary, but to permanent objects; and with those views the course which they are represented as pursuing towards the native race would be completely incompatible.

What the testimony here alluded to may be, does not appear, as none has yet been adduced, or wherever it may be, if it place the accuracy of the statements beyond dispute, further corroboration would seem to be unnecessary.

The people who are described as being able, but not having the power to help themselves, are the Red River half-breeds, whose peace and prosperity, as far as the Company know, have never been interrupted. If they have any grievances to complain of, and remedies to propose, due consideration will be given to them.

The concluding remarks of the Report on the letter of Mr. Alexander Isbister (one of the memorialists), dated 5th March, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, now remain to be noticed.

The professed aim of these remarks is to set aside the testimony of Messrs. Beaver and Simpson, brought forward in corroboration of their statements by the memorialists, on the ground that they stand towards the Company in the relation of discontented servants. The fact of the discontent of these gentlemen, and the reason of it, rest, it is to be observed, entirely on the assertion of the Company, and it has been already seen that their assertions occasionally require proof.

Nothing can be easier than to get rid of inconvenient testimony in this way, if the principle be once admitted, that a simple charge of discontent is sufficient to incapacitate a servant from appearing in evidence against his former employer. The existence of a cause of complaint affords a very intelligible reason why the complainer should divulge information he would otherwise have been inclined to withhold, but no argument against the facts he may adduce, until these facts be impugned or disproved. In the case of Mr. Alexander Simpson, this has not been attempted. It would no doubt be very convenient for the Company, if his testimony could be summarily dismissed by their statement, that "it is inadmissible in the case." Unfortunately, however, Mr. Simpson having been for many years in their service, and for some time himself a shareholder, has in his possession ample means of proving the correctness of his statements, and is at present in this country ready to do so; and of this the Company are perfectly aware. As to the accusation brought against him of excluding from his quotations from his brother's work whatever speaks favourably of the Company, he has excluded no more than what from his brother's own letters appears to be untrue (see Contrasts); so far, indeed, from being influenced by motives of resentment in his observations on the state of the Hudson's Bay territories, it will be found from a perusal of his work, that he uniformly speaks of the Company in a spirit of moderation and fairness which offers a marked contrast to the accounts of the various other authors cited in the Appendix, (his own brother, for example), who labour under no imputation of prejudice against that body.

Mr. Beaver's testimony is attempted to be got rid of in a similar way: "he parted from the Company a disappointed and discontented man."

So various and contradictory are the accounts given of this gentleman in the various publications of the Company (according to the particular purpose of the moment), that it becomes somewhat difficult to give anything like a precise or definite answer to the objections that have been brought against his testimony. It will perhaps afford the best refutation of those objections, and best illustrate the contradictions into which the Company have fallen in their anxiety to throw discredit on his statements, if these conflicting accounts are here brought in contrast.

From Mr. Beaver's own letter to the Aboriginal Society, it appears that he resided at Fort Vancouver from 1836 to 1838, when he finally left the country, having been the only recognized missionary (not American) who ever entered that territory.

During the short period of his residence there, he is described by Sir George Simpson as "having established missions and schools at several of the Company's principal depôts or forts on the Columbia River, west side of the Rocky Mountains."

According to the Report, on the other hand, he never left Fort Vancouver at all; and while there, occupied himself chiefly in exhibiting his "dissatisfaction with everything and everybody, and creating dissensions among the inmates of the fort; and after two years of contention, quitted his post in 1838, leaving the objects for which he was appointed in a great measure unaccomplished."

According to Mr. Thomas Simpson, writing in 1843, he had, it seems, made his appearance once more at Fort Vancouver, in his old capacity of "principal chaplain;" whereas Mr. Beaver was actually at this time at the Cape of Good Hope, where he still is. Again, it is stated in the Report, that the Company, upon his return to England, were obliged to dispense with his further services, upon which he parted with them a disappointed and discontented man.

In another place it is made a subject of complaint against him, "that he would not wait at Fort Vancouver to see his suggestions for the improvement of the native population adopted, but announced his intention of returning to England, though before he received replies to his various representations," from which it would appear that he had previously dispensed with them.

Mr. Beaver is censured, and that in no very measured terms, for "attributing to the Company's servants on mere hearsay, crimes, of which a little inquiry, had it suited his purpose to inquire, would have shown them to be innocent." This accusation next subsides into a charge of exaggeration, while a little farther on, those very crimes (of which their servants were first entirely innocent) are explained away, or justified as acts of self-defence. To reconcile these curious and remarkable discrepancies, is not the province of the memorialists; to attempt anything in the way of answer is obviously out of the question, and indeed unnecessary, as they sufficiently answer themselves.

The only circumstance calling for notice in the attack on Mr. Beaver, is the attempt made to invalidate his testimony, by means of some extracts from his letters to Mr. Harrison, the Deputy-governor of the Company. These extracts, however, are in no sort of contradiction to his letter to the Aborigines Protection Society, and contain, indeed, nothing which any man in his situation, willing to make every allowance for the neglect the Indians had experienced previous to the arrival of a clergyman among them, might not be expected to have written. The school he found established at Fort Vancouver, though highly creditable to Dr. M'Laughlin, whose individual act it was, is, it is only proper to observe, a self-supporting institution, being maintained by the labour of the boys, who, according to Mr. Wilkes, fully earn their own livelihood.

The facts recorded by Mr. Beaver in his publication can at any time be proved by the evidence of several persons now in England, who were on the spot at the time they occurred. One of these, it may be remarked, witnessed from the deck of his ship the massacre recorded, the particulars of which are inserted in his log-book now in his possession, and were reported, as Mr. Beaver says, to the gentlemen in charge of Fort Vancouver, by whom no notice was taken of it.

It is quite possible that the Company may not be aware of any instance, except that recorded by Mr. Thomas Simpson, in which the lives of the natives have been sacrificed by their servants. There are, however, but too many well-authenticated cases of this nature, which an inquiry will at any time bring to light. They cannot, however, plead ignorance to the fact, that two (*b*) out of the three who were concerned in that dark transaction, were re-admitted into their service (where they still continue), on their acquittal in Canada, the third having been sentenced to transportation.

They also deny that the tariff exhibited by Mr. Isbister is in use in any part of the territories under their management. The value of this denial will appear from the extracts under the head of trade, from Sir John Richardson, Lieutenant Chappel, and Dr. King, Appendix 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, as well as from the following Declaration:—

"We, the undersigned, late of the Hudson's Bay Company's service, being requested to state whether the tariff given by Mr. A. K. Isbister, in his pamphlet intituled 'A few Words on the Hudson's Bay Company,' is used in any part of the Company's territories, do testify and declare, that with the exception of rum, which is not sold to the Indians so far north, the different articles stated in the tariff are bartered with the Indians at the rates there mentioned, in the district called the Mackenzie's River District, and we believe that, so far as it goes, it is a true statement of the prices paid to the Indians for their furs in that part of the Hudson's Bay Company's territories where we resided several years.

"James Banks, witness.  
"John Sutherland, witness."

his  
"Peter X Walls.  
mark.

"John Sandison.  
"William Nicholson."

"STATEMENTS corroborating the Assertions of Sir J. H. Pelly and Sir George Simpson, and disproving those of Messrs. Beaver and Simpson."—Hudson's Bay Company's Report, Appendix (a).

UNDER this head are brought together various extracts from the works of Messrs. Wilkes, Parker, Dunn and Thomas Simpson, in support of certain statements of Sir John Pelly and Sir George Simpson, on the part of the Hudson's Bay Company (see Pamphlet\*) \* At p. 85. As regards the value of the testimony here brought forward, it is unnecessary to add anything more to what has been stated in the introductory observations on Sir John Pelly's letter. Such as it is, however, it has seldom any real bearing on the particular points impugned by the Memorialists, which have not always been kept in view in the so-called corroborations.

The assertion with which the statement opens is altogether fallacious. As has been already stated, the Company, on receiving their license of exclusive trade in 1821, as well as on the renewal of that grant in 1842, came under a positive obligation to introduce Christianity and civilization among the Indians. An extreme anxiety is manifested throughout the Report to disclaim this obligation, and considering the manner in which it has been fulfilled, this is not surprising. The sincerity of this disclaimer will appear from the following extract from Sir John Pelly's letter to Lord Glenelg, on the occasion of his applying for a renewal of the

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Company.

Company's license in 1837, in which it will be seen that this obligation, now denied, was then as anxiously paraded. "By the Report of Mr. Simpson, your Lordship will likewise see what has been done up to the present time in reference to the native population, in accordance with the benevolent provisions contained in the license of exclusive trade under which the Hudson's Bay Company conduct that part of their business situated beyond the limits of the territories they hold under their charter." Of these "benevolent provisions" the Company now profess an entire ignorance.

Whether they have, as they profess, assisted and prepared the way for the Church Missionary Society, can be best ascertained by inquiry of the society's officers in England.

The last sentence of the quotation from Mr. Alexander Simpson, given in the Report, referring to the introduction of ("10 or 12") Wesleyan missionaries into the country since 1839, was omitted in Mr. Isbister's table of contrasts, for the following reasons:

1st. The statement it contains is incorrect in point of fact. There were never more than four Wesleyan Missionaries in Rupert's Land. Mr. Simpsón, as is evident from the expression he employs (10 or 12), spoke from report, in which he was mistaken. If the inaccuracy can be of any benefit to the Company, however, they are welcome to it.

2dly. What occurred since 1839, can have no bearing, either in proof or disproof, of what Sir George Simpson asserted to have taken place previous to 1837. The quotation itself, it may be remarked, is incorrectly cited; there being no mention in the original of missionaries being "introduced by Sir George Simpson."

In reviewing the several statements in detail, it will conduce to brevity, and exhibit more clearly the character and degree of proof by which each is supported, to throw the whole into a tabular form.

## ASSERTION.

1. It was stated by Sir George Simpson, that between the years 1821 and 1837, the Company had established two Protestant and two Catholic missions, and 13 schools under the management of their chaplains at Red River settlement (not the chaplains, as it is incorrectly quoted in the Report.)

It was never denied that there were missions and schools at Red River, but that the Company had established them, as Sir George Simpson asserted, and of which he has not produced any proof.

2. "The Hudson's Bay Company have likewise established missions and schools at several of the depots or posts on the Columbia River, west side of the Rocky Mountains, under the management of another of their chaplains."—Sir G. Simpson's Letter.

The whole of this assertion, as well as the corroborative extract from Mr. Thomas Simpson, has been already disproved from the evidence of the Report.

The school Mr. Beaver describes was established by Dr. M'Laughlin, and, as already mentioned, supports itself. As he was altogether only two years in the country, during which he never left Fort Vancouver, the assertion that he established missions and schools at several of the Company's posts, is obviously flagrantly incorrect.

## ASSERTION.

17: "I have no hesitation in saying, that the native population of the countries through which the Hudson's Bay Company's business extends, never derived any real benefit from their intercourse with the whites, until the fur trade became exercised under the existing license.

"In proof of this, the population of some of the tribes, previous to that time sensibly diminishing, is now increasing.

"On the banks of the Columbia River, we are directing our attention to agriculture on a large scale. I have also the satisfaction to say, that the native population are beginning to profit by our example, as many formerly dependant on hunting and fishing, now maintain themselves by the produce of the soil."

## PROOF ADDUCED.

An extract from the Bishop of Montreal's Journal, showing that there were at that time the number of missions and schools here stated.

2. (a) An extract from Mr. Thomas Simpson's work,—"The Company's principal chaplain resides at Fort Vancouver," &c. given at length at page of 12 the introduction. (b) Extract from Mr. Beaver's letter to the Committee, describing a school that gentleman found in operation on his arrival at Fort Vancouver.

## PROOF ADDUCED.

(a) Extract from Mr. Parker:—"Thus I am putting myself without fear into the hands of the Indians, where a few years ago an escort of 50 men was necessary," &c.

(b) Second extract from same,—"The gentlemen of the Hudson's Bay Company deserve commendation for their gentle treatment of the Indians," &c.

(c) Extract from Mr. Dunn, drawing a very just contrast between the conduct of the English and American traders:

(d) Extract from Mr. Wilkes,—"An opinion has gone abroad, I do not know how, that at this post there is a total disregard of morality and religion. I feel myself bound to state the contrary," &c.

(e) Second extract from same, containing an account of the school described in the previous paragraph by Mr. Beaver, from which it would seem the school had decreased nearly one-half since that gentleman left.

It

## THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. - 69

It is to be observed, with respect to these extracts, that they are for the most part of a relative character, designed to exhibit the contrast between the English and American traders, which it is but small praise to say is given, and that justly, in favour of the former.

The true explanation of Mr. Parker's first extract is to be found in the fearful depopulation of the Indians in this part of the Company's territories which Dr. M'Laughlin estimates at nine-tenths of the entire population since the year 1829. Mr. Townsend justly attributes the change described by Mr. Parker to this cause; the Company very naturally claim it as the result of their own superior management. They will not, perhaps, take it ill, that others entertain a different opinion.

(b) Mr. Parker's second extract affords an instance of the very slender foundation on which that gentleman occasionally rests his opinions. By a reference to his journal, which is kept in the form of a diary, this entry relative to the gentle treatment of the Indians by the gentlemen of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the efforts which some few of them have made to instruct those about them in religion, is found under the date of the 7th October, when it seems that he had been exactly one day within the limits of the Company's territories, had visited one of their establishments, and had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with one of their officers. If Mr. Beaver is to be credited, he afterwards found reason to modify this opinion, or at all events had, like most others, a private as well as a public opinion of the Company. "There was a missionary here (at Fort Vancouver) of the name of Parker, for nearly a year." He arrived at Oahu, in the 'Columbia,' the day before ourselves, and spoke in no very respectful terms of an establishment where he had received many substantial marks of hospitality, more than board and lodging."—*Letter to Mr. Garrison*, Report, p. 23.

(d). The improvement Commodore Wilkes describes as having taken place at Fort Vancouver at the time of his visit, is highly gratifying. That a similar improvement is much needed in other parts of the country not so accessible to visitors as Fort Vancouver, will be seen by a reference to the Appendix (No: 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 & 20.)

(e) The school described by Mr. Wilkes, is the same referred to by Mr. Beaver. Mr. Parker also mentions it in the following terms: "There is a school connected with this establishment, for the benefit of the children of the traders and common labourers, some of whom are orphans, whose parents were attached to the Company; and also some Indian children, who are provided for by the generosity of the resident gentlemen."

18. It is to be hoped that the instructions issued by the Company for the suppression of the traffic in slaves will have the desired effect.

19. "At the Red River and Columbia schools, children are educated belonging to many of the distant tribes.

"We are using our utmost endeavours in every other part of the country where the climate and soil admit of it, to collect the Indians into villages, and direct their attention to agriculture, as the first step towards civilization."—*Letter of Sir G. Simpson*, dated 1 February 1837.

(a) Extract from a letter of Mr. Beaver, in which he speaks of some measures in contemplation for the civilization of the Indians.

(b) Second extract from same, dated October 1837, containing an account of "the first attempt" of the natives at the cultivation of the soil.

(c) Third extract from same, complaining of the encouragement given to American emigrants and missionaries.

(d) Extract from Mr. Parker, gratefully commemorating the civilities and hospitality he had experienced at Fort Vancouver.

It is needless to say these extracts afford no confirmation of the statements they were intended to support. On the contrary, as far as the accuracy of Sir George Simpson's assertions is concerned (which is the particular point now under consideration), they show them to be without foundation; that up to the date of that gentleman's letter, instead of any measures having been taken, as he states, for the civilization of the Indians, and directing their attention to agriculture, nothing whatever had been done for this purpose. Mr. Beaver's letter, detailing the "first attempt" of the natives in the vicinity of Fort Vancouver at the cultivation of the soil, is dated October 1837, and could not have reached England before the year after. Sir George Simpson's letter is dated 1st February 1837, of course before he could have any knowledge of its being made. As neither Mr. Wilkes nor Mr. Parker make any allusion to any settlement of Indians, it may be inferred that this "first attempt" was never followed by a second. This was, indeed, unnecessary, as the Company, shortly after this, obtained a renewal of their license.

Of the assertion that "the Company are using their utmost endeavours in every other part of the country to collect the Indians into villages," &c., no proof whatever is offered. It would be, indeed, not a little extraordinary if there were.

(d) The extract from Mr. Parker is purely personal, and has no reference whatever to the point under consideration. It furnishes, it may be observed, a very intelligible key to the testimony he has borne to the Company.

To estimate the true character of the Company's policy, and of those efforts for the civilization and moral and religious improvement of the natives, of which they claim the credit, it will be necessary to bear in mind that Fort Vancouver, and, until very recently, the settlement on the Red River, have, strictly speaking, been all along without the pale of their authority, while, from their proximity to the United States and Canada, they have been at all times, more or less, accessible to visitors. For the purposes of the fur trade, these districts have ceased to be valuable to the Company, the game of the surrounding country

Appendix, No. 26.

having been long ago exterminated; and hence it is no longer their interest to interpose any obstacle to the instruction and civilization of the inhabitants, as long, at least, as they can be isolated (as is the case at Red River) from the Indians of the interior. Accordingly, while the settlement has been, perhaps, better supplied with the means of instruction than the same amount of population even in England, in the immense interior territory situated to the north of this, such measures of improvement only have been permitted, or may hereafter be looked for, as are forced on the Company by public opinion or by the direct interposition of the Legislature. As will be apparent from the extracts from Mr. Thomas Simpson's correspondence, the enlightenment and civilization of the Indians is associated in the minds of the traders with the apprehension of a diminution of their profits. It is, therefore, hopeless to expect from them any sincere or effective co-operation with the objects of the missionaries.

## PROFITS of the TRADE, &amp;c.

The particular point for consideration here, is the "equitable and liberal system of trade" adopted by the Company in their dealings with the natives. The extracts from Mr. Wilkes and Mr. Dunn have, however (with one exception), no reference whatever to this subject. Extract (c) from Mr. Wilkes, describes the mode in which the trade is conducted, but gives no information whatever as to the rates at which goods are bartered with the Indians. Referring, moreover, only to the manner in which the trade is conducted at Fort Vancouver, it affords no criterion of the system which is adopted in other parts of the country where the Indians have not, along the frontier, access to rival traders.

Appendix, 29 &amp; 30.

## APPENDIX.

## No. 1.

To the Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Society.

No. 6, Bird-street, St. George's, East,

12 April 1847.

My dear Sir,  
I AM sorry to inform you, that I can no longer remain in London, in consequence of having no longer the means of supporting myself on shore. You are aware that I am brought up to the sea, and I am about to make a short voyage to Quebec, to recruit my funds. I hope, however, this will not injure the cause which I have so much at heart, as I hope to be back in sufficient time to give my evidence at any investigation in reference to the Hudson's Bay Company which may take place, and support the statements I have already authorized in the memorial to Earl Grey, to which my name is attached.

I believe I informed you of the base and dishonourable attempt of Sir George Simpson and others to induce me to withdraw my name from our memorial, and thus to throw discredit upon its statements; and I now submit to you a convincing proof of the truth of my assertion, in the enclosed document, drawn up under the direction of Sir George Simpson, and in the hand-writing of Mr. William Smith; certain portions, however, which you will readily recognize being in the hand-writing of Sir George Simpson himself. As you will at once see, it was drawn up for me to copy and sign. I need not say with what indignation, and even shame for the parties who drew it up, I received this disgraceful overture.

I hope my absence will not injure the success of the good cause in which we are engaged. I intend to collect further evidence in our favour in Canada, where there are many persons residing who can give important information on the subject of the conduct of the Hudson's Bay Company towards the natives.

With the most heartfelt gratitude for your kind and disinterested efforts in our behalf.

I remain, &amp;c.

(signed) John Stuart M'Leod.

The Secretary of the Aborigines Protection Society,  
9, Lower Brook-street, Berkeley-square.

The following is a *fac-simile* of the document referred to in Mr. M'Leod's letter:—

London, 6, Bird-street, St. George's-in-the-East,\*

20 March 1847.

Dear Sir,  
I RETURN you the Memorial, which I have now carefully read over, and I feel bound to say, that if I had done so before I signed it, I never would have put my name to it. The truth is, I really know nothing whatever respecting the matters there stated; but I signed the paper, being told that the half-breeds at Red River wished it, and that it would be for their good.

I am,

Sir George Simpson,  
Hudson's Bay House, London.

Dear Sir,

Your very obedt.

\* The words printed in *Italics* are in the hand-writing of Sir George Simpson, and the rest in that of Mr. William Smith, Assistant Secretary to the Hudson's Bay Company.

## THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 71

### No. 2.

THE attention of the chief to myself and those immediately about me, particularly in sending down fresh supplies previous to my arrival, I feel fully grateful for; but I cannot conceal my disappointment at the want of accommodation exhibited towards the crews of the vessels under my command in a British possession.

We certainly were not distressed, nor was it imperatively necessary that fresh beef and vegetables should be supplied, or I should have made a formal demand. But as regarded those who might come after, and not improbably myself amongst the number, I inquired in direct terms what facilities Her Majesty's ships of war might expect in the event of touching at this port for bullocks, flour, vegetables, &c., and I certainly was extremely surprised at the reply that they were not in a condition to supply. As any observations here would be useless, and I well knew this point would be settled when authority could be referred to, I let the matter rest. But having been invited to inspect the farm and dairy, and been informed of the quantity of grain and the means of furnishing flour, and notwithstanding the profusion of cattle and potatoes, no offer having been made for our crews, I regretted that I had been led into the acceptance of private supplies, although at that time the other officers of the establishment had told my officers that supplies would of course be sent down.—*Narrative of a Voyage round the World, by Captain Sir Edward Belcher, R.N., 1843.*

### No. 3.

SOME few years since, the Company determined on forming settlements on the newlands situated on the Willamette and other rivers, and providing for their retired servants by allotting them farms, and further aiding them by supplies of cattle, &c. That on the Willamette was a field too inviting for missionary enthusiasm to overlook; but instead of selecting a British subject to afford them spiritual assistance, recourse was had to Americans,\* a course pregnant with evil consequences, and particularly in the political squabble pending, as will be seen by the result. No sooner had the American and his allies fairly squatted (which they deem taking possession of the country), than they invited their brethren to join them, and called on the American Government for laws and protection.—*Ibid.*

### No. 4.

THE navigation is rather cramped, and it is really surprising that with so much capital at stake, and shipping, &c., that the Company have not brought up a set of pilots, by which many thousands might have been saved, independent of the creation of such a useful body of men.—*Ibid.*

### No. 5.

AT the lower settlement (on the Red River) there are two forts, one called Fort Garry, belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company; the other, called Fort Douglas, is the property of the colony. There are also two houses of worship, one of them of the Protestant Episcopal Church, erected and supported at the expense of the London Bible Society, who likewise supply the funds for a free-school. The clergyman who attended both to the church and school, had left there a short time before our arrival, on a visit to England.

The other church is the cathedral of a Roman Catholic Bishop established there. His diocese extends north of the United States' boundary line, from the Rocky Mountains to Upper Canada. He is styled Bishop (*in partibus*) of Julianopolis. A Catholic school instituted at this place by the missionaries, and conducted upon the same plan as Mr. McCoy's on the St. Joseph, appears to have been attended with the same success. The whole of the expenses of this Catholic Ecclesiastical Establishment is, we believe, defrayed by the Bishop of Quebec.—*Professor Keating's Narrative of an Expedition to the Source of St. Peter's River and Red River* (by Order of the United States Government); published 1825, Vol 2, p. 60.

Missionary expenses, by whom defrayed.

### No. 6.

WE cannot fail in wishing this colony success, because it will not, we think, vitally affect the interests of the fur trade, which is chiefly carried on to the north-west of the settlement, and because even if it did, the benefits and advantages which would result from it would be much greater than those arising out of the fur trade. When we take into consideration that the whole of that trade is limited to two ships of 300 tons each, which sail annually from Hudson's Bay to England, and whose return cargoes of British goods are amply sufficient to purchase the furs and supply the wants of traders, we shall be convinced that the prosperity of England, either in a commercial or a manufacturing point of view, cannot be materially affected by the rise or decline of this trade. The evil which it has done to Canada has been frequently and justly deplored; it has allured many of her youths from the steady occupation of agriculture, to attend to the wandering pursuits of the traders; it has instilled into their minds a taste for extravagance and dissipation; it has accustomed

\* It is not surprising that Sir Edward Belcher should have thought that the American missionaries were employed by the Company. It is scarcely necessary to say he is mistaken; they did not go quite so far in their love to Americans.

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accustomed them to the lawless habits, which have been for a century back a subject of regret to the missionaries and to the philanthropists. No doubt can exist that the young men who have been annually sent out from Canada, and who were formerly termed the "Courreurs de Bois," have had more influence in demoralizing the Indians of North America than any other cause whatever. They have distributed liquor more freely and more extensively than any other traders; they have accustomed the Indians to that promiscuous intercourse which destroys every rational as well as every virtuous feeling; they have made them parties in their quarrels, thereby exciting them to acts of hostility against white men.

## No. 7.

Discouragement of Agriculture.

But when we consider that the policy of the Hudson's Bay Company, in whom is vested the right of soil to all that part of the British possessions drained by the tributaries of Hudson's Bay, is opposed to the colonization of their territory, their interest prompting them to foster the fur trade, the profits of which must diminish in proportion to the increase of population, we have very little to apprehend from the attack of a powerful enemy from that quarter.—*Report of Major Long (Commander of the United States Expedition) to the United States Government, Keating's Narrative*, p. 238.

## No. 8.

THE ground about the house is not only excellent, but fit for immediate culture; the house a few years ago was in most excellent repair, and exhibited a very productive farm, the effect of the continued care and attention of Governor Williams, who had a great partiality for agricultural pursuits. A vast change, however, had taken place at the time of our arrival; the house was all but falling to pieces; the implements of tillage and the spacious barns were silent monuments of waste; the horses were becoming wild, the oxen occasional truants; the cows, although they went "to the milk-pail twice a day," gave by no means a Virgilian quantity of that sober and nutritious beverage; and a solitary hog stood every chance of dying without issue.—*King's Narrative of a Journey to the Arctic Ocean, under the Command of Captain Back, R. N.* Bentley, 1836, Vol. 1, p. 54.

## No. 9.

THE most distant establishment of the Canadian traders was on the banks of the Saskatchewan River, in lat. 53°, long. 103°. This place was situated at a distance of upwards of 2,000 miles from the colonized part of Canada; the route to it was through a country occupied by numerous savage tribes, where the means of subsistence were scanty, and the navigation unfit for any other craft than frail birch-bark canoës; yet we have evidence that at these distant establishments considerable improvements were effected; that agriculture was carried on, and even wheel-carriages used; in fact, that they then possessed fully as many of the attendants of civilization as they do now, after the lapse of a century.—*Life and Travels of Thomas Simpson*, p. 112.

## No. 10.

Deprivation of the Indians.

It is a matter of melancholy reflection, that the civilization of the North American Indians, a numerous race, gifted with the finest qualities that human nature is capable of displaying, should have been obstructed, rather than promoted, by their communication with Europeans; but so it is. They have, by force of example, been taught every vice that could tend to their degradation; while they have not been instructed in those arts which would have added to their comforts and conveniences. At the same time that their land is taken from them either by force or artifice, they are debased by a ruinous system of traffic, particularly by that adopted by those engaged in the fur trade, which has been the means of removing from the face of the globe many numerous tribes that once composed the finest and noblest of the uncivilized nations of the North.—*King's Narrative of a Journey to the Arctic Ocean, under the Command of Captain Back, R. N.*, Vol. 2, p. 50.

## No. 11.

THE agents of the Hudson's Bay Company are not satisfied with putting so insignificant a value upon the furs, that the more active hunters only can gain a support, which necessarily leads to the death of the more aged and infirm by starvation and cannibalism; but they encourage the intemperate use of ardent spirits. From the effect of intoxication upon Europeans, an adequate notion of the frenzy with which a North American Indian is inspired when under the influence of liquor can scarcely be formed. He will then with equal indifference shed the blood of friend or foe; his dearest connexions are murdered without compunction; and when the unfortunate wretch has recovered his reason, lie laments in vain the misery which his own fury has entailed upon him. Notwithstanding the Indians justly ascribe to the fur traders the blame of having supplied them with that which has caused such desolation, they will not scruple to seize the first opportunity of again obtaining the poisonous draught, and plunging with headlong infatuation into new scenes of riot and bloodshed.—*Ibid*, p. 50.

## No. 12.

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## No. 12.

ALL the Indians on the Columbia entertain a strong aversion to ardent spirits, which they regard as poison. They allege that slaves only drink to excess, and that drunkenness is degrading to freemen. On one occasion, some of the gentlemen at Fort George induced a son of Comcomby, the chief, to drink a few glasses of rum; intoxication quickly followed, accompanied by sickness, in which condition he returned home to his father's house, and for a couple of days remained in a state of stupor. The old-chief subsequently reproached the people at the fort for having degraded his son by making him drink, and thereby exposing him to the laughter of his slaves.—*Narrative of Six Years' Residence on the Western Side of the Rocky Mountains, by Ross Cox.* Bentley, 1831, Vol. 1, p. 321.

Aversion of the Indians to ardent spirits.

## No. 13.

REVENGE for the death of kinsmen murdered through the means of intemperance, has been productive of wars, which have ceased only with the extirpation of the contending parties. Additionally, the natives clearly perceive that the use of spirituous liquors is depopulating their country in a fearful manner, and yet they have not strength of mind to withstand the temptation which the traders, from interested motives, are daily holding out to them by an ample supply, as long as they have any furs to barter. Sir John Franklin pointed out these baneful effects, since which period the Hudson's Bay Company have prohibited its introduction beyond Cumberland House. If the leading members of that Company suppose they have benefited the natives by that prohibition, they are much mistaken; for the Chipewyans who inhabit the country to the north of that establishment are averse to its use, and to this cause may be imputed, not only their superiority in numbers, but in moral character also.—*King's Narrative, Vol. 2, p. 52.*

## No. 14.

THAT body (the Hudson's Bay Company) has assumed much credit for its discontinuance of the sale of spirituous liquors at its trading establishments, but I apprehend that in this matter it has both claimed and received more of praise than is its due. The issue of spirits has not been discontinued by it on principle; indeed has not been discontinued at all, where there is a possibility of diminution of trade through the Indians having the power to resent this deprivation of their accustomed and much loved annual jollification, by carrying their furs to another market.—*Report on the Condition of the North American Indians, addressed to the Aborigines Protection Society, by Alexander Simpson.*

Intoxicating liquors supplied to the Indians by the Hudson's Bay Company.

## No. 15.

IT might be thought that the Crees have benefited by their long intercourse with civilized nations. They are capable of being, and I believe are willing to be taught, but no pains have hitherto been taken to inform their minds; and their white acquaintances seem, in general; to find it easier to descend to the Indian customs and modes of thinking, particularly with respect to women, than to attempt to raise the Indians to theirs. Indeed, such a lamentable want of morality has been displayed by the white traders, that it would require a long series of good conduct to efface from the minds of the native population the ideas they have formed of the white character.—*Sir John Richardson, in Captain Franklin's Journal of his First Expedition.*

Character and example of the Company's servants.

## No. 16.

IF it were possible to eradicate from the mind of the North American Indian all knowledge or traditional remembrance of the interference of the whites, which has been exerted with fearful demoralization for two centuries, and place him in the same state as when first discovered, it would be far easier to effect his civilization.—*King's Narrative, Vol. 2, p. 56.*

## No. 17.

VIEWING the service generally, I must candidly confess, judging from the actions of others, that its promises of happiness are hollow, while an awful fatality seems to overhang its retiring members; a punishment for the unprincipled and licentious lives they have led.—*Letter of Thomas Simpson to his Brother. "Life and Travels of Thomas Simpson," p. 81.*

## No. 18.

THE Metiffs; or, as the Canadians term them, Bois-brules, are, upon the whole, a good-looking people, and, where the experiment has been made, have shown much aptness in learning and willingness to be taught; they have, however, been sadly neglected. The example of their fathers has released them from the restraints imposed by the Indian opinion of good and bad behaviour, and, generally speaking, no means have been taken to fill the void with better principles. It is, however, but justice to remark, that there is a decided difference in the conduct of the children of the Orkneymen employed by the Hudson's Bay Company and those of the Canadian voyageurs. Some trouble is occasionally bestowed.

bestowed in teaching the former, and it is not thrown away; but all the good that can be said of the latter is, that they are not quite so licentious as their fathers are.

\* \* \* \* \*

A practice may also be noticed, as showing the state of moral feeling on these subjects amongst the white residents of the fur countries. It was not very uncommon amongst the Canadian voyageurs for one woman to be common to and maintained at the joint expense of two men, nor for a voyageur to sell his wife either for a season altogether, or for a sum of money proportional to her beauty and good qualities, but always inferior to the price of a team of dogs.—*Sir J. Richardson, in Captain Franklin's Journal.*

## No. 19.

NEXT to the introduction of ardent spirits, a contagious disease, produced by the demoralizing intercourse of Europeans, has, more than any other cause, been the means of depopulating the country. It has of late so extensively spread itself among them, that there was scarcely an Indian family which I met with during my progress through that vast territory, that was not more or less affected with it, and to such a deplorable condition are the Copper Indians reduced by that scourge, that in a few years, if some aid be not afforded them, they will cease to exist. It is gratifying to know that the subject of ameliorating the condition of the aborigines bordering upon our colonies is now engaging the attention of Government. Hitherto no system has been adopted for their improvement, and with the exception of the exertions of the missionaries, no attempts have been made.—*King's Narrative*, p. 54.

## No. 20.

THIS race (the half-breeds) is now numerous throughout the Indian country, particularly on the east side of the Rocky Mountains. Owing to the recent arrival of white people at the Columbia, they are comparatively few on the western side. The sons of the voyageurs, on attaining a proper age, are generally engaged in the Company's service. They are called "Les Bois-brûles," but why it is difficult to ascertain. While they are taught to despise the traditions of their mother's tribe, no one busies himself in unfolding to them the divine truths of Christianity, and the loose manners of their fathers are but ill calculated to impress them with any great respect for the ties of morality. It is, therefore, not surprising that when precept is silent, and parental example vicious, they should exhibit conduct at variance with the habits of civilized life.

They are good canoe-men, and excellent hunters, remarkably active either on horseback or on foot, brave, daring, rather passionate, and while they possess all the vivacity of their father, they at times manifest a slight symptom of Indian ferocity. This, however, is only evinced when any insulting allusion is made to their mixed origin.

They are open-hearted, generous, practise little cunning, detest hypocrisy, and while they are determined not to submit quietly to a wrong, are extremely cautious against giving any unnecessary cause of offence.

The proprietors generally send their sons to Canada or England for education. They have a wonderful aptitude for learning, and in a short time attain a facility in writing and speaking both French and English that is quite astonishing. Their manners are naturally and unaffectedly polite, and their conversation displays a degree of pure, easy, yet impassioned eloquence, seldom heard in most refined societies. The half-breed women are excellent wives and mothers, and instances of improper conduct are rare among them.—*Ross Cox*, p. 343.

See also Rev. Mr. Beaver's Letter to the Aborigines Protection Society, and accompanying Pamphlet on the Hudson's Bay Company.

## No. 21.

By various means this Company (the Hudson's Bay Company) has succeeded in rendering the natives entirely dependent upon them for existence, and they deeply feel their degraded situation. The introduction of fire-arms may be assigned as one cause, for as long as they could obtain a supply of ammunition, they neglected the use of the bow and arrow, the spear, and the various modes of trapping and snaring their game, which, from constant disuse, they have now wholly forgotten. That of granting on credit, both in the spring and autumn, a larger outfit of clothing and ammunition than the Indians are able to repay by their winter and summer excursions, places them so completely in the power of the trader by the debt thus incurred, that this must be considered another cause of their decline. When they become advanced in life, and no longer able to hunt, they are refused a supply of ammunition, which has become essential to their very existence, and they die, consequently, from absolute starvation. These evils have been increasing upon them of late to so great an extent, that they have become cannibals by necessity; and scarcely a month passes but some horrid tale of cannibalism is brought to the different establishments.—*King's Narrative*, p. 52.

## No. 22.

There are some extensive tracts of country in which the means of a subsistence are scanty in the extreme. In the region lying between Lakes Superior and Winnipeg, the natives, during the winter, can with difficulty collect enough of food to support life. In the country

country lying immediately north of the Canadas, though fur-bearing animals are still comparatively numerous, and the trade consequently valuable, the poor Indians have, at all times, a hard fight against famine. In this tract of country, fish is at all seasons scarce, and in winter the sole dependence of the natives for subsistence is placed upon rabbits (the most wretched food upon which to exist for any time that can possibly be conceived); and when these fail, the most frightful tragedies at times take place. Parents have been known to lengthen out a miserable existence by killing and devouring their own children.—*Life and Travels of Thomas Simpson*, p. 429.

## No. 23.

A few days afterwards an Indian in a diseased state, with his wife and three children, arrived in so miserable a condition that they were mere skeletons; and, in the evening of the same day, another Indian came in, with two boys of the age of 10 and 14 years. The latter we soon got rid of, and on the 13th the two women and four children were sent away; the diseased Indian was allowed to remain; in fact, his legs were so excoriated from the constant friction of his frozen robe against them, that he literally could not move. He soon, however, recovered, and followed, but not to join them; for out of that party of nine not a soul escaped! Poor creatures! they lay stretched on the lake, far happier, let us hope, than the disconsolate being who was destined to witness so horrid a spectacle. The temperature on their departure was 92° below the freezing point; and four days afterwards the thermometer descended as low as 102°. Such intense cold, in their emaciated state, very soon put an end to their sufferings.

The old woman was found at the same time frozen in her hut, a circumstance so little anticipated, that it was not until the dogs had dragged her from her miserable dwelling that we were aware of it. That calamity was the more deplorable, as she had recovered of late so rapidly, that in a few days more she would, in all human probability, have walked again. No time was lost in burying the body, as the only means of saving it from the voracious dogs, which had of late been on very short allowance of pemican, a food that does not agree with the canine species.

At that time, between 40 and 50 human beings lay dead around us, and so scattered that it was impossible to walk in any direction within 20 miles without stumbling against a frozen body. This was not, however, a solitary instance of extreme misfortune to the natives of the north; for the two previous years had been pregnant with the same appalling visitations to the inhabitants of the country about Slave Lake and the Mackenzie River. In the neighbourhood of the Rivière au Liard, a tributary to the Mackenzie from the westward, many of the Chippewyans had been destroyed by famine; the actual number of deaths could not be ascertained, with the exception of 40 of the choicest hunters, whose fate was known. Considering, therefore, that their wives and families were equally unfortunate, and generally speaking they are the first that fall a sacrifice, there could not have been a less number than from 100 to 150 of our fellow creatures deprived of life at that place alone. It will not require many such years to exterminate the whole of the noble and intelligent races of the north.—*King's Narrative*, p. 169.

## No. 24.

IN taking leave of the territories on the Columbia, it may be proper to mention a circumstance very slightly noticed by Mr. Parker; the dreadful depopulation which has already taken place among the Indian tribes in this extreme western district, caused by the practice of incessant and murderous wars, and also the visitation of diseases introduced by the white men; the subject is thus alluded to by Mr. Townsend: "The Indians of the Columbia were once a numerous and powerful people; the shore of the river, for scores of miles, was lined with their villages; the council fire was frequently lighted, the pipes passed round, and the destinies of the nation deliberated upon; war was declared against neighbouring tribes; the deadly tomahawk was lifted, and not buried until it was red with the blood of the savage; the bounding deer was hunted, killed, and his antlers ornamented the wigwam of the red man; the scalps of the Indian's enemies hung drying in the smoke of his lodge, and he was happy. Now, alas! where is he? Gone—gathered to his fathers, and to his happy hunting-grounds—his place knows him no more."

"The depopulation has been truly fearful. A gentleman told me that only four years ago, as he wandered near what had formerly been a thickly peopled village, he counted no less than 16 dead men and women, lying unburied and festering in the sun in front of their habitations. Within the houses all were sick; not one had escaped the contagion; upwards of a hundred individuals, men, women and children, were writhing in agony on the floors of the houses, with no one to render them any assistance. Some were in the dying struggle, and, clutching, with the convulsive grasp of death, their disease-worn companions, shrieked and howled in the last sharp agony."

"Probably there does not now exist one, where five years ago there were a hundred Indians; and, in sailing up the river from the Cape of the Cascades, the only evidence of the existence of the Indian is an occasional miserable wigwam, with a few wretched half-starved occupants."—Quotation from Mr. Townsend's Work on the Oregon, given in Mr. Parker's *Journey beyond the Rocky Mountains*, p. 69.

## 76 CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO COMPLAINTS OF

No. 25.

DURING my stay at Vancouver, I frequently saw Casenove, the chief of the Klackatack tribe; he lives in a lodge near the village of Vancouver, and has always been a warm friend of the whites. He was once lord of all this domain. His village was situated about six miles below Vancouver, on the north side of the river, and within the last 15 years was quite populous; he then could muster four or five hundred warriors; but the ague and fever have, within a short space of time, swept off the whole tribe, and it is said that they all died within three weeks. He now stands alone, his land, tribe and property all departed, and he left a dependent on the bounty of the Company:

\* \* \* \* \*

CASENOVE'S tribe is not the only one that has suffered in this way; many others have been swept off entirely by this fatal disease, without leaving a single survivor to tell their melancholy tale.—*Commodore Wilkes' Narrative of the United States' Exploring Expedition*, Vol. 4, p. 369.

No. 26.

I HAVE found the Indian population in the lower country, that is, below the falls of the Columbia, much less than I had expected, or than it was when Lewis and Clarke made their tour. Since the year 1829, probably seven-eighths, if not, as Dr. M'Laughlin believes, nine-tenths, have been swept away by disease, principally by fever and ague. The malignancy of these diseases may have been increased by predisposing causes, such as intemperance, and the general spread of venerea, since their intercourse with sailors. But a more direct cause of the great mortality was their mode of treatment.—*Parker*, p. 43.

No. 27.

WHEN will this wide-spreading and fertile country be brought under cultivation, and be filled with an industrious population? From time immemorial the natives have not stretched forth a hand to till the ground, nor made an effort to raise a single article of produce more than what springs up spontaneously; nor will they, until their minds are enlightened by Divine truth. It is unlikely that any philanthropist, not under the influence of Christian principles, will ever engage in the self-denying work of enlightening their minds, and arousing them from their indolence.

As on our frontiers; so on these western shores, the work of destruction, introduced by those who should be the friends of the Indian, is rapidly going forward. The Indians in this lower country, that is, below the Cascades, are only the remnants of once numerous and powerful nations.—*Ibid.*, p. 35.

No. 28.

## PRICES paid to the INDIANS for their FURS.

THE standard of exchange in all mercantile transactions with the natives is a beaver skin, the relative value of which, as originally established by the traders, differs considerably from the present worth of the article it represents; but the Indians are averse to change. Three martens, eight muskrat, or a single lynx or wolverine skin, are equivalent to one beaver; a silver fox, white fox or otter, are reckoned two beavers, and a black fox or large black bear, is equal to four; a mode of reckoning which has very little connexion with the real value of these different furs in the European market. Neither has any attention been paid to the original cost of European articles, in fixing the tariff by which they are sold to the Indians. A coarse butcher knife is one skin; a woollen blanket or a fathom of coarse cloth, eight; and a fowling-piece, 15.—*Sir John Richardson, in Captain Franklin's Journal*.

No. 29.

THE prices paid to the natives for their furs are, in general, exceedingly small. Throughout the whole of the protected territories, the value of goods bartered for furs is, certainly, under one-twentieth of the value of these furs in England. While in places not protected, in order to crush or prevent competition, even more than their full value has occasionally been given; and at the establishments on the outskirts of Canada, the prices permanently offered, are from two to three-fold greater than those given to the natives of the regions over which an exclusive right of trade exists.

It is true that other expenses necessarily occurred in the prosecution of trade, such as the wages of officers and servants, and the freight of shipping, add to the otherwise ridiculously small outlay of the Company; still enough remains of what is “wrung from the hard hands of the Indians,” to pay dividends in London which made Hudson's Bay Stock, notwithstanding the large capital sunk in the rivalry with the North-west Company, one of the best investments in England.—*Life and Travels of Thomas Simpson*, p. 427.

No. 30.

By comparing the value given to the Indians for their furs, and the price they are sold for by the Hudson's Bay Company in London, we may draw our conclusions as to the oppression of those people. Three marten skins are obtained for a coarse knife, the utmost value

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value of which, including the expenses of conveying it to those distant regions, cannot be estimated at more than 6*d.*; and three of these skins were sold last January in London for five guineas. With the more expensive furs, such as the black fox or sea otter, the profit is more than tripled; and but a few years ago a single skin of the former species was sold for fifty guineas, while the native obtained in exchange the value of 2*s.* Surely that honourable Company, which by Royal charter is permitted to reap such golden harvests, might appropriate a small fund to rescue from starvation the decrepit and diseased, who in their youthful days have contributed to its wealth.—*King's Narrative*, Vol. 2, p. 53.

### No. 31.

It should never be forgotten that the Hudson's Bay Company are but as invaders of the soil on which these excesses are committed by their servants, and that, as such, the least they can do is to restrain all unnecessary violence towards the rightful possessors, both of it and of the furs which it produces, not for the benefit of the aborigines, but for the promotion of far distant mercantile interests.

\* \* \* \* \*

And with respect to the furs of that country, to rob their lawful owner of them, by taking possession of them either with no payment or a most inadequate one, is surely not a legitimate method of teaching him their proper use and value. Of articles bartered by the Company for peltry and other native produce, one-half may be classed as useless, one-quarter as pernicious, and the remainder as of doubtful utility; for I cannot but consider of very questionable utility, in the real sense of the word, even that clothing for which the natives are servilely dependent on the Company, and for which they have long since discarded the vestments which their own country spontaneously affords.—*Letter of Mr. Beaver to the Aboriginal Society*.

### No. 32.

THAT nothing serves so effectually to deaden the spirit of mercantile application as an unjust monopoly, is evident from an old record of the year 1742, which runs thus:

"When the Indians came to the factory in June 1742, they could get but a pound of gunpowder for four beaver skins, a pound of shot for one beaver, an ell of coarse cloth for 15, a blanket for 12, two fish-hooks or three flints for one, a gun for 25 skins, a pistol for 10, a hat with a white lace for seven, an axe for four, a hedging-bill for one, a gallon of brandy for four, a checked shirt for seven; all which was sold at the monstrous profit of 2,000 per cent."—*Lieutenant Chappel's Narrative of a Voyage to Hudson's Bay*.

### No. 33.

CHARLES the Second, King of England, by a charter of the year 1670, granted what did not belong to him; and as men willingly profit by abuses which favour their views, he sheltered himself under the authority of Borgia; that is to say, under the right of discovery. Sanctioned by such a principle and charter, Prince Rupert and his associates, under the name of the Hudson's Bay Company, appropriated not only the exclusive fur trade of these countries, but also all the lands lying near or beyond Hudson's Bay.

\* \* \* \* \*

The Hudson's Bay Company, in spite of the great concessions if claimed and obtained by virtue of the charter I have mentioned, had not extended its commerce much above Lake Winnipeg before the year 1806.

In 1811, the Company pretended to sell to Lord Selkirk a vast tract of land on the Red River. To this land their title was still worse than that of Charles the Second, inasmuch as the charter granted only the lands within the entrance of the straits commonly called Hudson's Straits, nor had the aboriginal inhabitants ever given their consent to the occupation of them. This farce was very well calculated to impose on the blind; but the Northwest Company, who were very clear-sighted, and had their agents in the very centre of the government, were not so easily gulled.

Two powerful enemies may mutually injure each other, at the same time that they labour without suspecting it in favour of a third party, whoops perch is the friend of neither, and who keeps vigilant watch on all their errors. In this case, Machiavel, I think, advises them to unite; so thought the two Emperors—Alexander, and Napoleon at Erfurth; and the Hudson's Bay and Northwest Companies prudently followed their example. They saw that the Americans rejoiced at their dissensions, and were ready to take advantage of them; and by an act of oblivion, concord and alliance, they have concealed from the public and the government their crimes, and the falsehood of their pretended rights. But who committed the massacres? Oh! the Indians. And the brutal violations? The Indians. And the pillagings, &c. &c.? It was all the Indians, who had never appeared on the scene. The United Companies; however, found the colony was very convenient and useful. It was a nursery for men of whom they stood in great need, for the numerous stations of their immense trade, which extends its ramifications as far as the Columbia. Those men, too, they could pay as slaves, whereas Canadian labour was very costly.

Whenever any money makes its appearance, the Company carefully get it into their hands. It has adopted a curious "circulating medium." They pay and are paid in handkerchiefs,

See also Life and Travels of Thomas Simpson, p. 114.

\* The settlers at  
Red River.

stockings, breeches, shirts, &c. &c., and if they \* make a fortune, it must be all in clothes. These trumpery things are fixed at an exorbitant price, so that if they could succeed, which would be very difficult, in turning them into money, they would get no more than a fifth or sixth of what they cost. It is thus rendered impossible for them to get away. These poor people have thus been reduced to a level with savages, without sharing their advantages or enjoying their independence. This is a stretch of cunning which avarice only could enable them to reach. \* \* \* \*

Two Catholic priests had also established themselves here, but as neither the Government nor the Company gave them any means of subsistence, they went away, and the church, constructed like all other buildings of trunks of trees, is already falling into ruin.—*Voyage to the Sources of the Mississippi and Red Rivers.* By J. Beltrami, Esq., Judge of a Royal Court in Italy. London : Clarke and Hunt, 1828.

## No. 34.

## ATTACHMENT of the INDIANS to the BRITISH GOVERNMENT.

The Americans.

THERE can exist but little doubt, that most, if not all those Indians (around Red River) would, in any emergency decidedly favourable to their views, take up arms against the people of the United States. They have no calamity to dread so fatal to their repose as that of the inroads of our population + upon their territory, and no evil so much to be deprecated, and so pernicious to their welfare, as that of a free intercourse between them and a semi-barbarian race, often resident among them, and always ready to occupy the ground from which they retreat.

In fine, the language held forth by the Indian in relation to the Americans is, that they have claim to no other feeling but that of abhorrence, and that it is from principles of policy, and not of esteem and reverence, that he treats them with deference, professes friendship for them, and allows them to share in his confidence.—*Report of Major Long to the United States Government.* Keating's Narrative, Vol. 2, p. 241.

## TESTIMONY of Retired Servants of the Hudson's Bay Company.

THE following Questions were proposed by John Laughton, Esq., Merchant, St. Margaret's Hope, Orkney, to—

1. William Banks	(8 years in the service of the Company) left	- 1799
2. Magnus Tait,	15 ditto - - ditto	- 1808
3. William Nicholson	11 ditto - - ditto	- 1834
4. John Sandison	11 ditto - - ditto	- 1840
5. Peter Walls	6 ditto - - ditto	- 1844

in the presence of the undersigned witnesses on the 22d April, and on the 29th June 1847.

Question.—1. At what post or posts in the Hudson's Bay Company's territories were you stationed, and how long did you remain at each?

Answers.—1. I was two years at Fort Albany, one at Fort Askial, two years at Osnaburg House, one year at Lac La Pluie, one year at Lake Winnipeg, and one year at Martin's Fall.—W. Banks.

2. I was one year at Fort Albany, seven years at Osnaburg, one year at Saskatchewan, one year at Lake St. Ann's, and five years at Red River.—M. Tait.

3. I was one year at Jack River, four years at Fort Simpson, and one year at Churchill.—W. Nicholson.

4. York Factory, one year; Oxford House, two years; and eight at Mackenzie's River.—J. Sandison.

5. One year at Norway House; one year at Mackenzie's River, and the remaining four at Peel's River.—P. Walls.

2. What tribe or tribes of Indians belonged to the forts where you were stationed—stating whether they were numerous or not; and their disposition, whether peaceable and friendly, or the contrary?

1. Crees.—W. Banks.

2. Crees; at all those places but Red River. Assiniboines and Stone Indians, Mandans and Gros Ventres Indians, at Red River.—M. Tait.

3. The Crees at Jack River, and Rabbit-skin and Dog-rib Indians and Mountain Indians at Fort Simpson. The Crees were not numerous, but friendly and peaceable; the Indians at Fort Simpson were numerous, and very peaceable. A few Slave Indians visited Fort Simpson; they were also of a peaceable disposition.—W. Nicholson.

4. At York Factory, the Cree Indians; Oxford House, the same; Mackenzie's River, Rabbit-skin Indians, Dog-ribs, Yellow-knives, Mountain Indians, Chippewyan Indians, and Rat Indians. The different tribes mentioned above were pretty numerous, and their dispositions peaceable, with the exception of the Mountain Indians, upon the quarter of the Russian settlements.—P. Walls.

5. At Norway House, Crees; at Mackenzie's River, Chippewyans and Dog-rib Indians; and at Peel's River, Fond du Lac Indians and Rat Indians.—P. Walls.

3. Are

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3. Are the Indians, where you have been, increasing or decreasing in number?

1. They were decreasing.—*W. Banks.*
2. I do not know.—*M. Tait.*
3. I cannot say.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. Do not think they were increasing.—*J. Sandison.*
5. Not exactly certain, but think they may be on the decrease.—*P. Walls.*

4. How are they generally clothed, and what kind of habitations have they?

1. The males wear a capot, made of coarse English cloth; and in the winter season they have skin tents.—*W. Banks.*

2. They were all clothed in skins, and had huts constructed of wood, and roofed with a covering of earth.—*M. Tait.*

3. The males wear a sort of coat of moose-deer skin, which reaches down to the knee; their under-clothing is made of rabbit-skins, cut into thongs; and then knitted together, reaching also to the knee; and a small apron of cloth covering their nakedness. The females wear a gown, reaching rather below the knee. Both males and females wear stockings and shoes, of moose-skin, in winter.—*W. Nicholson.*

4. In skins. Some in skin tents, and some in brush huts.—*J. Sandison.*

5. Generally with skins of animals. Habitations, tents.—*P. Walls.*

5. Upon what kind of food do they generally live during the different seasons of the year, and how do they procure it?

1. In the summer season they live chiefly on fish; in the fall and spring they kill geese, ducks, &c.—*W. Banks.*

2. They lived upon fish, and flesh of animals. The animals were enclosed in pens, and shot at with the bow, or killed with spears.—*M. Tait.*

3. Chiefly deer's flesh inland, and fish by the river side. In the spring they sometimes kill ducks and geese. They hunt the deer and other animals with the gun, and catch fish upon fishing-tackle made of the rind of trees, constructed into nets, and thongs of hide with hooks attached.—*W. Nicholson.*

4. Fish and venison, principally, procured by hunting and fishing.—*J. Sandison.*

5. The greater part of their living is dried fish during the winter, and fresh fish and meat in the summer.—*P. Walls.*

6. Are the animals that supply food to the Indians, such as, buffalo, moose-deer, &c., increasing or decreasing throughout the country; and do the Company issue any regulations for preventing their destruction as they do in the case of the beaver and other animals that supply the furs for the trade?

1. There were no buffalo in those parts of the country where I have been. The Company do not issue any regulations for the destruction [preservation?] of those animals.—*W. Banks.*

2. I could not say whether they were increasing or decreasing, but the Company do not prevent their destruction.—*M. Tait.*

3. The animals, I think, are decreasing; and I am not aware of the Company having issued any regulations to prevent their destruction.—*W. Nicholson.*

4. Rather think they are decreasing; no orders issued to prevent the destruction of the animals mentioned in the query.—*J. Sandison.*

5. To the best of my knowledge, decreasing; no means used by the Company to prevent their destruction, so far as I know.—*P. Walls.*

7. How far are the Indians dependent upon the Company?

1. They could not live independent of the Company.—*W. Banks.*

2. At that time they were independent of the Company.—*M. Tait.*

3. The Indians having in most places become of late accustomed to the use of the gun, cannot live independent of the Company.—*W. Nicholson.*

4. Partly on the Company, and partly on their own resources.—*J. Sandison.*

5. They principally depend upon the Company.—*P. Walls.*

8. What are the most common diseases among the Indians; and do they in general die of a natural death?

1. They generally die of a natural death.—*W. Banks.*

2. The Indians are very healthy, and in general die of a natural death.—*M. Tait.*

3. I do not know of any disease prevailing among them; they generally die of a natural death.—*W. Nicholson.*

4. Not aware.—*J. Sandison.*

5. Not aware.—*P. Walls.*

9. Are those Indians who may be afflicted with disease or sickness, usually received into the forts for the purpose of being cured?

1. Very rarely.—*W. Banks.*

2. No.—*M. Tait.*

3. I never knew any case but one of an Indian having been taken into the fort for the purpose of receiving medical assistance; this case was at Fort Simpson.—*W. Nicholson.*

4. Not to my knowledge.—*J. Sandison.*

5. Never knew of any.—*P. Walls.*

10. Is

10. Is it customary for those who are too old to hunt, or who are disabled in any way from supporting themselves, to be maintained at the forts?

1. There may be some cases, but it is not customary.—*W. Banks.*
2. No.—*M. Tait.*
3. It is not customary.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. I have never known anything of the kind being done.—*J. Sandison.*
5. Never knew of anything of the kind being done.—*P. Walls.*

11. Do the Indians often starve, and from what cause?

1. They do; sometimes from indolence, and sometimes from scarcity of animals.—*W. Banks.*
2. Not where I have been.—*M. Tait.*
3. They do; the cause is attributable to the scarcity of animals.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. I have heard of them dying from the scarcity of animals, as well as not being able to obtain any fish.—*J. Sandison.*
5. I have often heard of them dying for want of food on account of the scarcity of animals.—*P. Walls.*

12. How do the Indians support life in times of famine?

1. They gather roots, or eat anything that will support life.—*W. Banks.*
2. They were not in want at any of the places where I have been.—*M. Tait.*
3. They oftentimes have to eat their own clothes; dogs are considered a dainty in such times; their flesh is eaten greedily, and, in fact, many things revolting to human nature.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. Sometimes on roots, and sometimes obliged to support nature by cannibalism. Rock-weed is also sometimes used.—*J. Sandison.*
5. I have heard on such occasions being obliged to eat the dead bodies of one another; and during my residence I was aware of two whites being killed and ate by them, and who were at the fort with me.—*P. Walls.*

13. Which class of Indians do you consider most comfortably situated, those who are entirely dependent upon the Company for their supplies, or those who have but lately become acquainted with the whites, and are not dependent on them; that is to say, which of them is best supplied with food and most comfortably clothed and lodged?

1. Those that are least dependent on the Company are best supplied with food, but those who trade with the Company are best clothed.—*W. Banks.*
2. The Mandah Indians were not dependent upon the Company, and, I may say, that in general, those who are least dependent upon the Company, are mostly comfortably lodged and clothed.—*M. Tait.*
3. I cannot say.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. All those who frequented the posts I have been at, are more or less dependent on the Company.—*J. Sandison.*
5. Those who are dependent on the Company may be best lodged, but those independent are most comfortably fed and clothed.—*P. Walls.*

#### MEANS OF INSTRUCTION.

14. Are there any schools for the instruction of the natives where you have been?

1. I do not know of any.—*W. Banks.*
2. None.—*M. Tait.*
3. There are no schools for the instruction of the natives.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. None at the posts I have been at.—*J. Sandison.*
5. A school was lately established at Norway House, by missionaries, but nothing of the kind at any other place where I was.—*P. Walls.*

15. Are you aware of any attempts of any kind having been made by the Company to civilise the natives, and instruct them in religion?

1. They are kept in ignorance and darkness.—*W. Banks.*
2. No.—*M. Tait.*
3. None.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. Not aware of any.—*J. Sandison.*
5. Not aware of any.—*P. Walls.*

16. Do the Company's agents use any endeavours, in those parts of the country where climate and soil are favourable, to collect the Indians into villages and direct their attention to farming?

1. They do not.—*W. Banks.*
2. They do not.—*M. Tait.*
3. They do not, but rather everything to the contrary.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. At Norway House a little.—*J. Sandison.*
5. At Norway House only.—*P. Walls.*

17. Are

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17. Are you acquainted with any tribes who practise agriculture as a means of support?

1. I have not seen or heard of any.—*W. Banks.*
2. None.—*M. Tait.*
3. I am not.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. Not any.—*J. Sandison.*
5. Not any.—*P. Walls.*

18. Are the Missionaries in the country encouraged and assisted in civilizing the natives by the Company's agents?

1. There were not any missionaries in the country then.—*W. Banks.*
2. There were not missionaries in the country at that time.—*M. Tait.*
3. I am not aware that they are.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. I do not know.—*J. Sandison.*
5. I believe they are.—*P. Walls.*

19. What is the condition of the Indian women?

1. They are rather modest.—*W. Banks.*
2. The women are modest, and seldom hold improper intercourse with the whites.—*M. Tait.*
3. They are in general chaste, but polygamy is common.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. I am not aware.—*J. Sandison.*
5. I am not aware.—*P. Walls.*

20. Do you consider that the natives derive much benefit from their intercourse with the whites, or any improvement from their example?

1. I think they have not derived any benefit, but, on the contrary, their morals are even corrupted by the whites.—*W. Banks.*
2. I think they have not.—*M. Tait.*
3. I do not think that they have benefited in any sense by their intercourse with the whites.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. I suppose they may in some cases.—*J. Sandison.*
5. I suppose they may in some cases.—*P. Walls.*

21. How is the Sabbath observed throughout the country?

1. I cannot say that the Sabbath was observed anywhere that I have been.—*W. Banks.*
2. There is no attention paid to the Sabbath.—*M. Tait.*
3. At the forts it is a day of cessation from labour, but is not observed in any religious manner anywhere that I have been.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. Only at York factory, but attendance at worship not imperative.—*J. Sandison.*
5. No respect to Sabbath, with the exception of Norway House.—*P. Walls.*

22. When the Indians commit any crime, have they the benefit of any sort of trial before they are punished?

1. I had no opportunity of knowing, as I never saw one guilty of any crime come within reach of the Company.—*W. Banks.*
2. I had no opportunity of knowing.—*M. Tait.*
3. I do not know.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. I have known of no other crime but petty theft, which merely received a reprimand.—*J. Sandison.*
5. I have known of no other crime but petty thefts, for which they would receive a reprimand from the agent.—*P. Walls.*

### TRADE.

23. What is the average hunt of an Indian?

1. I think about 100 beavers a year.—*W. Banks.*
2. I do not know.—*M. Tait.*
3. I am not certain.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. I am not exactly certain.—*J. Sandison.*
5. I am not exactly certain.—*P. Walls.*

24. What articles are most in demand by the natives?

1. Guns and ammunition, English cloth, brandy, tobacco, knives, axes, trinkets, &c.—*W. Banks.*
2. The Mandan Indians did not trade much with the Company; all the others exchange their furs for guns, ammunition, brandy, tobacco, beads, paint, hatchets, &c. &c.—*M. Tait.*
3. Guns and ammunition, tobacco, axes, ice-chisels, &c.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. Guns, ammunition, tobacco, axes, chisels, flints and steel, &c.—*J. Sandison.*
5. Ammunition, tobacco and beads.—*P. Walls.*

## CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO COMPLAINTS OF

25. Are the Indians kept in debt?

1. They generally were.—*W. Banks.*
2. They were, frequently.—*M. Tait.*
3. I cannot say.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. In some cases.—*J. Sandison.*
5. At Norway House they were.—*P. Walls.*

26. Are the Indians supplied with ammunition by the Company, whether they can pay for it or not?

1. No.—*W. Banks.*
2. They were sometimes.—*M. Tait.*
3. Very rarely.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. Only on rare occasions.—*J. Sandison.*
5. Only at times.—*P. Walls.*

27. Are intoxicating liquors supplied in any parts of the country to the Indians, and where?

1. Intoxicating liquors were supplied to the Indians at all the places where I was.—*W. Banks.*
2. All but the Mandan Indians are desirous to obtain intoxicating liquors, and the Company supply them with it freely.—*M. Tait.*
3. At Jack River, I saw spirits given in exchange for furs.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. At York Factory and at Oxford House.—*J. Sandison.*
5. At Norway House only.—*P. Walls.*

28. In the case of the removal of a trading post, what becomes of the Indians attached to it?

1. They generally follow, or resort to the nearest.—*W. Banks.*
2. They generally go with their furs to the nearest, or where they can get a supply of liquor.—*M. Tait.*
3. The trading posts are seldom removed, but when such does happen, the Indians resort to the nearest one.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. Generally go to the nearest trading post.—*J. Sandison.*
5. Generally go to the nearest trading post.—*P. Walls.*

29. Is an Indian allowed to do with his furs what he thinks proper?

1. The natives at that time had liberty to do as they chose with their furs, except in cases when they were in debt at any of the forts.—*W. Banks.*
2. At that time, there were several rival companies, and the Indians generally had power to dispose of their furs as they thought proper.—*M. Tait.*
3. He has no other resource than to give them in trade to the Company's agents.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. No; they are not.—*J. Sandison.*
5. No; they are not.—*P. Walls.*

30. Are all the furs that are collected at York Factory annually sent home by the Hudson's Bay Company's ships?

1. I think they are.—*W. Banks.*
2. I think so.—*M. Tait.*
3. I think so.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. I believe they are not.—*J. Sandison.*
5. I suppose they are, so far as I know.—*P. Walls.*

31. Are they sometimes (such as rats) intentionally destroyed?

1. I am not certain.—*W. Banks.*
2. I never heard of their being destroyed.—*M. Tait.*
3. Not that I am aware of.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. I do not know.—*J. Sandison.*
5. I do not know.—*P. Walls.*

32. Do the Company ever alter the price of the trading goods to the Indians?

1. Not so far as I know.—*W. Banks.*
2. No; I think they do not.—*M. Tait.*
3. They do not; at least where I have been.—*W. Nicholson.*
4. At the several forts the prices are different.—*J. Sandison.*
5. At the different posts they do.—*P. Walls.*

These certify, that the above queries have been proposed to William Banks, Magnus Tait, William Nicholson, John Sandison and Peter Walls, and answered in our hearing.

Witnesses,      *James Banks.*      *John G. Guthrie.*  
*John Sutherland.*      *Charles E. Henderson.*

It is necessary to bear in mind, that the individuals whose evidence is here given, were stationed in different parts of the Hudson's Bay territories, which will account for any apparent discrepancy in their testimony.

Enclosure

# THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.

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## Enclosure 2, in No. 17.

The undersigned memorialist having been a short time in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, takes this opportunity of submitting some testimonials received from them on his retirement, which he trusts will absolve him of any imputation of being actuated by personal considerations in the present movement, to which advantage might otherwise be taken of this circumstance to expose him.

(signed) *A. K. Isbister.*

Mr. A. K. Isbister was in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company during the years 1837, 1838 and 1839, and uniformly maintained an irreproachable character, his conduct at the same time affording the highest satisfaction to his employers.

He quitted the Company's service for the purpose of prosecuting objects more congenial to his mind, and has, since his retirement, prosecuted his educational studies with great success at the Universities of Edinburgh and Aberdeen, and has thereby qualified himself for any situation in which literary and scientific attainments, joined to habits of business, are considered requisite.

(signed) *A. Barclay, Secretary.*

Montague-place, Islington.

I HEREBY certify, that I have known Mr. Alexander Isbister many years, and can with truth recommend him as a steady, assiduous young man. He has lately finished his studies at King's College, Aberdeen, and at the College of Edinburgh, previous to which he was three years in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, in the capacity of clerk and accountant; and where uniform good conduct and behaviour are required in every respect, I make no doubt Mr. Isbister will give satisfaction.

(signed) *John Charles,*  
Late Chief Factor in the service of the  
Hudson's Bay Company.

Parsonage, St. Thomas, Stepney, 20 June 1846.

I HEREBY certify, that Mr. Alexander Isbister has been known to me since his residence in London, and I have much satisfaction in bearing unqualified testimony to his exemplary conduct, unassuming manners, and assiduous devotedness to literary pursuits and theological studies; and from my first acquaintance with Mr. Isbister, I have entertained a high respect and regard for him, and am fully persuaded, that in the situation he now seeks, he would do credit to himself, and be a benefit to the institution.

(signed) *Wm. Valentine, M.A.*

University of Edinburgh, 24 May 1846.

I CERTIFY, that Mr. Alexander Isbister very regularly and diligently attended my lectures on Chemistry in the University and King's College, Aberdeen, during the winter session, 1842-43; that he obtained a prize at the examination of my class, and in all respects conducted himself to my satisfaction as an industrious and attentive student. I have also much pleasure in stating, that the whole conduct of Mr. Isbister, during his residence both in Aberdeen and at this University, has been such as to obtain for him the good opinion of all his teachers; and that I consider him as a gentleman well qualified for any situation of confidence, and who is sure to give satisfaction to his employers.

(signed) *William Gregory, M.D.,*  
Professor of Chemistry.

Dear Sir,

King's College, Aberdeen.

SUBJOINED you will find a certificate of your attendance in the Mathematical class here.

It will gratify me much to hear of your success in life, being confident, that in whatever situation you are placed, you will acquit yourself creditably. With every good wish,

I am, &c.

(signed) *J. Tulloch.*

I hereby certify, that Mr. Alexander Isbister attended the Mathematical class in this University during the session 1843-44; that the progress which he made in several branches of mathematical science was highly creditable both to his talents and his industry; that at the close of the session he carried, by comparative trial, one of the prizes given by the University for proficiency in mathematics, and that he conducted himself on all occasions with the greatest propriety:

(signed) *J. Tulloch,*  
Professor of Mathematics.

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My dear Sir,

Edinburgh, 20 June 1846.

It gives me the greatest pleasure to state, that I have now known you for some time, and have had ample opportunities of ascertaining, in our mutual intercourse, that your abilities are of a very high order, and your numerous acquirements are at once evidence of hard study and excellent talents.

Aware, as I am, of the manner in which you distinguished yourself at the different Universities in which you have studied, having carried off the prizes in the classes of Chemistry, Greek and Mathematics, and obtained the first place in the class of Natural History, I feel convinced that you are, in a high degree, fitted to teach the different branches of natural science.

(signed) *J. Wilkinson, M.D.,  
Lecturer, and Examiner in Medicine.*

MR. ISBISTER attended a course of Lectures on Natural History, with demonstrations and excursions, given by me in Marischal College in the summer of 1844. I have pleasure in bearing testimony to the zeal and diligence with which he pursued his studies, and have reason to believe that the progress which he made was very considerable. His general intelligence, urbanity and correct deportment were also obvious, and the impression which his conduct has left upon my mind is such, that I must esteem him as one of the best and most agreeable of the students who have ever been under my charge.

Marischal College, Aberdeen.

(signed) *W. M'Gillivray,  
Professor of Natural History.*

Edinburgh University, 15 May 1845.

MR. ISBISTER attended, with the utmost regularity, the class of Logic and Metaphysics in the University of Edinburgh during the session of 1844, in which I did duty for Sir William Hamilton.

I understand that his studies have extended over a wide range of science, and on the occasions on which I had the pleasure of conversing with him; he appeared to be a man of great intelligence and energy.

(signed) *J. F. Ferrier,  
Professor of Universal History, and pro tem.  
of Logic and Metaphysics.*

Dear Sir,

King's College, Aberdeen.

AGREEABLY to your request, I hasten to furnish you with a testimonial of your earlier studies here.

Had you supplied me with later details, I feel assured, from our earlier intercourse, that before now I should have borne testimony to various and satisfactory attainments in the different branches of knowledge to which I am aware your mind has been sedulously applied, and which I trust may one day lead to fortunate results.

I am, &c.  
(signed) *Hugh M'Pherson.*

The bearer, Mr. Alexander Isbister, having attended the elementary Greek class of this University during the whole of the College session 1841-42, and the senior class during the succeeding sessions, I have great pleasure in bearing testimony to the regularity and great success with which he prosecuted his studies, as also to the correctness of his general deportment during the period alluded to.

(signed) *Hugh M'Pherson,  
Professor of Greek, and Sub-Principal of the University.*

Dear Sir,

Royal Dispensary, Edinburgh, 8 May 1846.

It affords me much pleasure to embrace this opportunity of bearing testimony to your excellent character and varied qualifications. During the period of our acquaintance, I have formed a very favourable opinion of you as a gentleman and a scholar, and I have no doubt you will give great satisfaction in any situation of the kind for which you are applying.

While assisting me at the Royal Dispensary, you were very attentive, and embraced every opportunity of obtaining practical knowledge, and you always conducted yourself with the utmost propriety.

I am, &c.  
(signed) *David Gordon, M.D. and Surg.:  
Physician to the Royal Dispensary, and  
Lecturer on Materia Medica.*

Enclosure

# THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 85

## Enclosure 3, in No. 17.

PAMPHLET referred to by Mr. Isbister, intituled, "A Few Words on the Hudson's Bay Company." Encl 3, in No. 17.

THE Hudson's Bay Company is now the only survivor of the numerous exclusive bodies which at one time depressed almost every branch of British commerce; and from the very peculiar conditions under which it holds even its present tenure of existence, is well worthy more than passing observation. Occupying a territory comprising a superficial area nearly one-third larger than all Europe, it reigns supreme over 50 native tribes of Indians, who are the slaves of its laws and policy, and scarcely removed but in name from being its actual bondsmen; it is, however, not upon that point we purpose to dwell, but rather upon a far more important and hitherto unpublished fact, namely, that although exercising commercial and territorial sovereignty over so wide a range of country, the charter under which it claims this right of despotic sway is illegal.

This Company was incorporated in the year 1670, under a charter of King Charles II., granting to them and their successors the sole trade and commerce to Hudson's Bay and Straits, with territorial rights and jurisdiction over all the lands and countries on the coasts and confines of the same, which were not actually possessed by the subjects of any other Christian prince or state, to be reckoned and, reputed as one of the British plantations or colonies in America, under the name of Rupert's Land. Of this territory the Company was constituted proprietor for ever, by free and common socage; as such enjoying over it supreme jurisdiction, civil and criminal, with power to grant lands, pass laws, make war or peace with all nations not being Christians, and, in short, to enjoy, under the Crown of England, all the rights and powers of a commercial sovereignty.

This extensive grant, however, did not receive any Parliamentary sanction or confirmation, and was, on that ground, held to be unconstitutional, or, at all events, failed to secure to the Company the privileges intended. To prevent the intrusion of rival traders, whom the defective charter could not restrain, the Company in 1790 were under the necessity of petitioning Parliament to confirm it. After considerable opposition, a Bill was obtained "For confirming to the Governor and Company of Adventurers trading to Hudson's Bay, their Privileges and Trade," but for the term of "seven years only, and no longer," and subject to certain conditions for the regulation of the sale of furs (for which see p. 95), respecting which it is sufficient to observe, that they have not been carried out. But though extending over a very limited period, there is reason to believe it effectually secured the immediate object contemplated, namely, the exclusion of rival traders from the country.

Qu. 1690?

Whether the Company, after the expiration of the Act, were apprehensive that Parliament would not renew it, or whether they deemed it impolitic to awaken public attention to the subject of their monopoly, the fact is no less certain than extraordinary, that they have never from that time to the present applied for a second confirmation of their charter; and to this day hold their monopoly of the trade to Hudson's Bay under the original grant of King Charles II., which, as shown above, was confirmed with reservation only for seven years, and upon its expiration in 1697, was not renewed. It is important here to insist upon the position of the Hudson's Bay Company at the period when it obtained its original grant, and when that grant was confirmed by the Act aforesaid; thus it will be seen that in 1670 the Company existed as a perpetual body, under no reservation; whereas under the 2d of William and Mary, it held its rights and privileges under restrictions, and only for a limited period.

Up to the cession of Canada to Great Britain, they continued in undisturbed possession of the territories to which they laid claim; but this event throwing the fur trade (which had been carried to a great height by foreigners trading under then existing French charters), into the hands of British subjects, the leading fur merchants of Canada formed themselves, in the year 1783, into an association under the name of the North-west Company of Montreal, who, after rapidly spreading themselves throughout the interior of North America to the Arctic Circle and Pacific Ocean, finally extended their establishments to Hudson's Bay itself. A contest marked with great bitterness and animosity ensued, which was carried on for many years, and ended in a coalition of the rival companies in 1821.

The influence of the new association was sufficient to procure from the Legislature a license of exclusive trade for the term of 21 years, over such parts of the Indian country as were not included in the original charter. This license was renewed in 1842 for a further term of 21 years; but with a reservation on the part of the Crown, namely, to revoke it at any time. We have here to call especial attention to the important character of this license, and of the distinction existing between it and the original charter. In the first place, it is not in any way a confirmation or extension of any former grant, and well aware that no government of the present day would renew such a charter as that of King Charles II., it has always been the policy of the Hudson's Bay Company to affirm that it requires no renewal; accordingly, the Company, in framing this last grant, took extreme care that the chartered territory described by them as the "proper territory of the Company," should be excepted out of it. Now the grant or license of 1821, which was renewed with the reservation before mentioned, is expressly limited to such "parts of North America as do not form part of the lands and territories theretofore granted [by charter] to the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, and not being part of the provinces of Canada, or of any lands belonging to the United States of America." The extent of territory thus granted under the license of 1842 is about 2,500,000 square miles; that

claimed

claimed under the charter very little less, comprising together the whole of British America, with the exception of the Canadas.

The entire stock in trade of the Company is not more than 400,000*l.*\* The yearly revenue they derive from all sources averages 200,000*l.* per annum, the profits upon which amount to 110,000*l.* Now, from this large amount of income England derives the enormous rental of 5*s.* yearly; whilst the exports consist of articles of trifling importance, the annual sum of which amounts to about 25,000*l.*, employing three ships of about 300 tons burthen yearly. Hence it is evident that the Hudson's Bay Company's monopoly is not productive of the slightest advantage to the budget of the mother country.

If England derives no benefit from the establishment of the monopoly, still less advantage is it to the natives of Rupert's Land. The avowed object of the exclusive arrangement of 1821, besides preventing competition in trade, and removing all inducements to the supply of spirituous liquors to the Indians as an article of commerce, was to provide facilities and means for instructing the natives, the Company stipulating to make "due provision for their civilization and moral and religious improvement." The subjoined memorial and petition, addressed to the British Government by those natives themselves, will show how far the Company have complied with the terms of their agreement. Nevertheless, in the teeth of notorious facts, on the occasion of the Company's applying for a renewal of their license in 1842, Sir George Simpson, as local Governor of the country, submitted a report to the Government (which has been printed by order of the House of Commons), detailing the exertions of the "Company's chaplains, missionaries and schoolmasters" in civilizing and evangelising the Indians, and describing the improved condition of the native population generally throughout the territory since the passing of the grant of 1821.

[*The Numbers on the inner margin correspond with the divisions of the Company's Report. Those on the outer margin refer to corresponding Numbers in the Appendix, corroborating the Statements of the Memorial.*]

THE following is the Memorial:—

To the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The humble Memorial of the undersigned Delegates from the Natives of Rupert's Land, in North America.

Most respectfully sheweth,

THAT your memorialists are natives of Rupert's Land, North America, entrusted with the duty of presenting the accompanying petition from their fellow-countrymen, the Indians and half-breeds residing in and near the colony on the Red River, praying for the redress of certain grievances therein set forth.

That from the harsh administration of the Hudson's Bay Company, discontent and misery prevail amongst the natives of Rupert's Land to an unparalleled extent; and your memorialists are most anxious that Her Majesty's Government should, as early as possible, inquire into the condition of the unfortunate people who are compelled to appeal to their Sovereign for protection against the ruinous effects and consequences of the monopoly which the Hudson's Bay Company have so long enjoyed under a charter that, according to some of the highest legal authorities, has long since lost its force. Your memorialists, trusting that a wise and paternal Government, distinguished for its attachment to a liberal policy and the principles of commercial freedom, will not suffer to pass unheeded the prayers of an oppressed and injured race, proceed to lay before your Lordship the grievances which gave rise to the accompanying petition, and humbly solicit your earnest attention to the same.

They complain, in the first instance—

That by the practice of exclusive trading with the natives, which the Hudson's Bay Company assert is secured to them by a Royal charter, that Company has for nearly the last 200 years, to the utter impoverishment, if not ruin of the natives, amassed a princely revenue, which, as your memorialists believe, now, amounts to nearly a quarter of a million sterling per annum. Though one of the leading objects contemplated by the incorporation of the Company, was the introduction of Christianity amongst the Indians, and the securing a due provision for their moral, religious and social improvement, little or none of the vast sums the Company has been permitted to accumulate, has been devoted to such purposes.

That, on the contrary, with a view of keeping the natives in a state of utter dependence, and of perpetuating the wandering and precarious life of the hunter, on which they erroneously consider the existence of the fur trade to depend, they have permitted generation after generation of the hapless race consigned to their care to pass their lives in the darkest heathenism. There is not at present, nor, as your memorialists confidently believe, has there ever been a single Indian school, church or other establishment for religious or general instruction, established by the Company throughout the whole of their extensive territories. What little has been done for the religious and moral improvement of the natives, is wholly due to the persevering exertions of the Church Missionary Society, and since the year 1839, of the Wesleyan Society of London. The Church Missionary Society receives no assistance whatever from the Company, and owing to the heavy expenses attending the establishment of Indian missions, its operations are necessarily very circumscribed. What assistance the Wesleyan

Appendix.

Appendix, 21.

See p. 92.

Appendix, 5, 10,

18, 19, 20, and

See p. 91-94,  
*infra*, and Testimony of retired Servants.

Appendix 19.

Remarks on Re-  
port, p. 60.

\* This capital is a fictitious one, for the purpose of reducing the apparent rate of interest.

# THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 87

- Wesleyan missionaries receive from the Company, if, indeed, they receive any, your memorialists are not prepared to say. The other objects for which the charter was granted, namely, for improving the country by opening up its mineral and agricultural resources, and facilitating the means of internal navigation and transport, so as to fit it for a future colony, have been equally overlooked, with the like view of adding to the aggrandizement of the Company.
- 5 That the Company, after having entered into a solemn obligation with the British Government to discontinue the supply of spirituous liquors to the Indians, and after having actually abolished the trade in ardent spirits in some districts for obvious purposes, for the first few years before and after the renewal of their last license, have again introduced this deadly and demoralizing poison; thus undoing the slight amount of good which the missionaries were beginning to effect, and interposing the greatest obstacle to their future success.
- 6 That owing to the numerous hunting excursions which the demands of the fur trade render necessary, and to the great slaughter of animals consequent thereon, the only present resources of the country have been gradually diminishing to such an extent, that the larger part of the native population can no longer find the means of supporting life from the produce of the chase, or the natural productions of the soil. In the more northern parts of the country, from which all missionaries are rigorously excluded, and where the richest furs are obtained, but where the animals which supply the food of man have almost become extinct, the Indians are exposed to the most frightful destitution. Numbers of them die yearly of famine, while others in the extremity of want and despair are tempted to commit the most revolting crimes to preserve a wretched existence. It is impossible for your Lordship's memorialists adequately to describe the sufferings of the natives who inhabit these portions of the country, arising from the exorbitant prices demanded by the traders for the wretched and almost valueless articles given in a mockery of exchange for the richest and most valuable furs.
- 7 That owing to the numerous hunting excursions which the demands of the fur trade render necessary, and to the great slaughter of animals consequent thereon, the only present resources of the country have been gradually diminishing to such an extent, that the larger part of the native population can no longer find the means of supporting life from the produce of the chase, or the natural productions of the soil. In the more northern parts of the country, from which all missionaries are rigorously excluded, and where the richest furs are obtained, but where the animals which supply the food of man have almost become extinct, the Indians are exposed to the most frightful destitution. Numbers of them die yearly of famine, while others in the extremity of want and despair are tempted to commit the most revolting crimes to preserve a wretched existence. It is impossible for your Lordship's memorialists adequately to describe the sufferings of the natives who inhabit these portions of the country, arising from the exorbitant prices demanded by the traders for the wretched and almost valueless articles given in a mockery of exchange for the richest and most valuable furs.
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- 9 Without tents of any kind to protect them from the severity of an arctic climate—unable from their migratory pursuits to abide in permanent habitations—half naked, owing to the exorbitant prices demanded for the clothes furnished by the Company, whilst they are, at the same time, restricted from exchanging the produce of their toil with any other parties—kept constantly in the Company's debt, which they spend their whole lives in an ineffectual effort to clear off—exposed yearly to all the horrors of famine, and the attendant cymes of murder and cannibalism—the wretchedness of the people's condition can scarcely admit of addition. The scarcity which prevails in the northern districts is gradually but surely extending to the south, and unless Government interpose its paternal authority to wean the Indians from their present wandering habits, and endeavour to turn their attention to agricultural pursuits, the whole of the northern tribes must, at no distant period, when the resources of the chase shall have failed them, be subjected to all the horrors of a widespread famine, from which they never can emerge.
- That from the line of conduct pursued by the Company, it does not appear probable to your Lordship's memorialists, that sufficient precaution will be taken by them to avert so overwhelming an evil; their agents in the country are for the most part men of very limited information, and doubtful exemplars to a people arriving so slowly at a social state. Wholly imbued with the mere spirit of trade, few of them are possessed of those generous sympathies and more enlarged views, which are necessary for undertaking and carrying out any comprehensive scheme of social amelioration. Their deity is gold, to obtain which they trample down Christianity and benevolence.
- 10 That feeling the utter inadequacy of the remuneration for their furs from the Company, many of the more enterprising of the natives, have formed a resolution to export their own produce, and import their own supplies, independently of the Company. They urge, that even supposing the charter were still valid, and that it vests in the Company an exclusive right of trade to Hudson's Bay as against all other traders from Britain, none of its provisions are or can be binding on the natives to trade with the Company exclusively, or can prevent them from carrying their furs or other property out of the country to the best market.
- 11 Where this course has been adopted, however, the Company's agents have seized the furs of such parties as refused to sell them at the prices fixed by the Company, and, in some instances have imprisoned the recusant natives. Against such gross aggressions on the rights and liberties of the natives, your memorialists most vehemently protest. Being unable to obtain redress from the local courts of the country, your memorialists feel entitled to claim the protection of the British Government, and humbly entreat your Lordship to take the case into your kind consideration.
- 12 It is also the painful duty of your Lordship's memorialists to advert to the precarious state of the public peace throughout the territory, particularly in and about the colony on the Red River. The majority of the Indians and half-breeds in that district depend mainly on the yearly summer buffalo hunts—the colony itself verging on the boundary-line of the United States, the whole of the hunting-grounds are in the American territories. From these grounds the American Government has warned off the hunters of the Red River in favour of the natives of the plains who are under its protection, and for this purpose detachments of American troops are stationed throughout the plains to warn off all persons intruding from the British side, but at the same time proffering them the alternative of becoming American citizens. The Hudson's Bay Company, on the other hand, claim whatever is hunted on the British side of the line, distraining the goods and imprisoning the persons of those who refuse to accede to their prices. Owing to these conflicting claims, the natives, who are the original owners of the soil, have their energies and hopes completely paralysed, and are doomed to starvation in a land which is their own both by birth and by descent.
- 13 Deeply convinced that the present appalling condition of the native population, their ignorance,

Remarks on  
Report, p. 60.  
Appendix, 7, 8, 9.

See License of  
1821.  
Appendix, 11, 12,  
13, 14.  
Testimony of  
Retired Servants.

Appendix, 21, 22,  
23, 24, 25, 26, 27.  
Appendix, 21, 28,  
29, 30, 31, 32.

Testimony of  
Retired Servants.

Appendix, *passim*.

Appendix, 15, 16,  
17, 18.

See Petition and  
Instructions.

Petition.

ignorance, their barbarism, and the sufferings and crimes consequent thereon, are ascribable to the present system of misgovernment, and also being fully satisfied that the existing evils would be remedied, and the still more fearful ones now pending averted, by the adoption of a system founded upon more humane and enlightened views, your memorialists most earnestly desire to impress upon your Lordship the solemn and sacred duty of inquiring into the condition of this deeply suffering people (the last remnant of a noble race), before inquiry or remedy prove too late. Hitherto no efforts have been made in their behalf by the Government of this country, to which alone they can properly look for protection and justice. The occasional reports which have from time to time been forwarded to the Government of this country, at least such as have been made public, are destitute of truth, and were evidently framed with a view to mislead the colonial authorities, and avert further inquiry. To show this, we need only request your Lordship's attention to the reports of Sir George Simpson, and beg of you to contrast them with a work published in 1845, intituled, "The Life and Travels of Thomas Simpson, by his brother Alexander." Though both brothers participated in the profits of the monopoly, and must, therefore, be presumed to be less than impartial witnesses, your Lordship will find that the book (published by Bentley, New Burlington-street) strongly sustains and fully corroborates the statements which we have the honour of laying before you.

*Appendix, passim.*

The spirit and tendencies of the Hudson's Bay Company are, for reasons that will readily suggest themselves, opposed to the spread of information among the native population, and unfortunately they possess but too many facilities for carrying into effect the short-sighted and pernicious policy by which they have uniformly been guided in their intercourse with the natives. They are without any direct or positive accountability to the Legislature of this country, and as regards their operations in the distant region over which they exercise jurisdiction, are practically beyond the reach of public opinion. Their sole aim is avowedly to draw the greatest possible revenue from the country, to attain which the considerations of humanity and religion are overlooked; while, as your Lordship will perceive by the statements now submitted, the lives of the unoffending native race, who, for no fault of their own, and for no reason that can be given, are deprived of their inheritance and their natural rights, and thus of the power of helping themselves, are being virtually sacrificed year by year to the same selfish and iniquitous object. What must be the ultimate fate of this unhappy people under such a system, it is as easy to foresee as it is painful to contemplate.

Your memorialists feel assured that upon a due consideration of the statements now submitted, supported as they can be by a weight of testimony which places their accuracy beyond dispute, your Lordship will extend to them that humane and considerate attention to which their great and urgent importance entitles them. What further corroboration in support of the above allegations may be considered necessary, your memorialists are ready to supply, as well as to suggest such remedies as are calculated to remove the evils complained of—such simple remedies as a people both willing and able to help themselves, but deprived of the power, alone require to restore to them the blessings of peace and prosperity, and render them happy, contented and grateful subjects.

(signed) *A. K. Isbister.* *D. V. Stewart.*  
*Thomas Vincent.* *James Isbister.*  
*John McLeod.*

A sixth memorialist, Mr. Sinclair, has been under the necessity of returning to America.

The following is the Petition which has been entrusted to the memorialists for presentation to her gracious Majesty:

Nous soussignés, les humbles et loyaux sujets de sa Majesté Victoire, Reine des Royaumes Unis d'Angleterre, d'Ecosse et d'Irlande, &c. &c., habitant un coin réculé de ses vastes domaines sur la Rivière Rouge, Département de la Baye d'Hudson, avons osé, avec un confiance entière, nous adresser à votre Seigneurie, pour la supplier de déposer au pied du Trône et d'appuyer de son crédit les représentations et les demandes que nous exposons avec un humble respect dans la présente requête.

Attirés par de pompeuses promesses sur ce point du vaste territoire de la Baye d'Hudson, nos pères avoient espéré que les plans de feu Lord Selkirk seroient ponctuellement effectués; que, suivant les contrats en faveur des colons, leurs denrées, &c., seroient vendues à un prix suffisant fixé dans ces dits contrats, et que les travaux du laboureur ne seroient pas paralysés par l'impuissance d'en vendre les produits. Toutes ces promesses ont été éludées, toutes ces espérances ont été frustrées.

Le monopole, qui depuis environ cent soixante et seize ans pèse sur nous, va toujours s'appaissant, au point qu'il ne nous est plus permis de nous entre échanger des pelleteries de notre pays pour des effets importés, où vice versa, sous peine d'être emprisonnés, ou de voir nos effets saisis sous le seul soupçon même qu'on doive les échanger pour des pelleteeries. Cette sévérité a été poussée jusqu'au point de défendre de recevoir du paiement pour des vivres procurés à des Indiens périssant de faim, à des distances éloignées de tout secours, vu que ce paiement ne pouvoit être que des pelleteeries, et nonobstant l'assurance de livrer les dites pelleteeries au magasin de la Compagnie même, et au prix qu'elle en voudroit donner. Une sévérité si révoltante, pour ne pas dire inhumaine, a irrité tous les esprits, et quoiqu'on fut en partie disposé à souffrir encore longtems pour prévenir les émeutes et éviter les conséquences funeste d'une irritation à peu près générale, ne pouvant plus adresser nos plaintes au Gouverneur de la Compagnie, pour lequel le peuple n'a plus de confiance, nous prenons le seul moyen qui nous reste d'épargner le carnage et le sang, en déposant au pied du Trône nos humbles et respectueuses supplications.

1<sup>o</sup>. Commé

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1<sup>o</sup>. Comme sujets Britanniques, nous désirons ardemment être gouvernés d'après les principes de cette constitution qui rend heureux tous les nombreux sujets de notre auguste Souveraine.

La justice s'administrant ici par un juge sol de par la Compagnie, les conseillers qui font les lois étant, ou créatures de la Compagnie, ou intéressés à ne point lui déplaire; etant tous, d'ailleurs, élus par le Gouverneur et le Comité de la dite Compagnie, il s'ensuit que le peuple éprouve un manque de confiance, et ne croit nullement à la possibilité d'avoir gain de cause en tout ce qui concerneeroit la Compagnie, ou un ami, ou un favori d'icelle. Cette disposition des esprits, si dangereuse à la paix et à tranquillité publique, n'existeroit pas, si le peuple, comme ailleurs dans les possessions Britanniques, avoit part aux loix qui se font, et si les jurisconsultes étoient indépendants de la Compagnie.

Nous osons humblement émettre la pensée où nous sommes, que des juges de paix ou magistrats, choisis parmi ceux que le peuple respecte et considère comme justes, aidés de jurés, seroit un mode de justice qui pourroit encore suffire longtems, ou du moins jusqu'à ce que les revenus municipaux puissent permettre les frais qu'exigeroit un cours de justice régulier.

2<sup>o</sup>. Comme sujets Britanniques, nous désirons et demandons avec instance, que cette liberté de commerce, si nécessaire à la prospérité des états, et si puissamment maintenue par les loix dans toutes les autres possessions de notre auguste Souveraine, nous soit accordée.

Par le monopole accordé à la Compagnie de la Baye d'Hudson, les habitants indigènes ont la pénible imposition de voir exportées toutes les richesses de leur pays au profit exclusif de commerçant étrangers, et tous les colons se voient dans la nécessité d'user d'effets importés, sans pouvoir faire exporter en échange aucun des produits de leur pays. Si quelques-fois certains commerçants particuliers ont voulu tenter de transporter quelques effets du pays, la Compagnie leur a suscité tant d'embarras qu'il leur a fallu s'en désister, et toujours au détriment du pays. Sous un pareil régime, le peuple est asservi à une espèce d'esclavage, les efforts les plus énergiques de personnes industrieuses et douées de talents commerciaux sont neutralisés; et sous cet état de choses, le mécontentement public ne peut qu'aller toujours croissant, jusqu'à ce qu'une explosion funeste à tous les partis s'en suive. Une parole de clémence de la bouche de notre Souveraine nous sauvera de ces dangers, en établissant la joie et la paix dans notre pays; puis en donnant au commerce l'énergie qu'il tire de sa liberté, déposera sur notre sol le germe de la prospérité.

3<sup>o</sup>. Nous supplions aussi qu'il soit accordé au conseil municipal de notre pays de vendre des terres à ceux qui voudroient émigrer de pays étranger à notre; et nous demandons instamment que pour un tems et à un taux fixé d'après le bon plaisir de sa Majesté, une somme soit prise sur cette vente pour améliorer les voies de transport.

Placés au centre de l'Amérique du Nord, à environ six cent milles de la Baye d'Hudson, le cours d'eau qui y communiquait est obstrué en divers endroits par des passages impraticables, où tous les effets sont transportés à bras, ce qui exige beaucoup d'hommes, beaucoup de tems, beaucoup de frais, et définitivement rend impossible l'export d'une très grande partie de nos produits.

Nos terres sont fertiles et aisées à cultiver. Le laboureur n'attend que l'espérance de pouvoir vendre pour se livrer avec énergie à un travail qui pourroit faire de ce pays un grenier à blé.

Nous sommes près de la ligne territoriale; nous pourrions nous ranger sur le territoire voisin; nous y sommes invités; mais nous admirons la sagesse de la Constitution Britannique, et nous en désirons les priviléges.

Le désir sincère qu'a notre auguste Reine de rendre tous ses sujets heureux est connu jusqu'ici et au-delà; nous espérons donc tout de sa clémence. En nous exauçant, Elle fera des heureux; et nous prierons, &c."

[Here follow about 1,000 signatures.]

Nous soussignés certifions sous serment, que les signatures au dessus ont été données librement et volontairement consenties par chacun des signataires réciproques.

Rivière Rouge, Département de la Baye d'Hudson, ce Premier Juin, Mil Huit Cent Quarante Six.

William Dease,  
J. Baptiste Payette,  
J. Louis Riel,

Charles Montigny,  
Cuthbert M'Gillivray,

Membres d'un Comité élu par le Peuple.

For the guidance of the Memorialists, the following Instructions, relating more specially to the Natives of the Red River District, were addressed to the Delegate in charge of the Petition:—

## INSTRUCTIONS to the Messenger by the Members of the Committee.

We, the undersigned members of a Committee elected by the people in order to redact a petition to elect a messenger, and commit to writing instructions to the same, in conformity with the desires and unanimously known interests of the people, have inscribed the following observations.

It will be a duty to the Commissioner to take the opportunity of every favourable circumstance to give a true state of the manner in which this colony and the country in general is governed; to expose sincerely the desires of its inhabitants, and the possible improvement for their welfare. He shall make use of moderation, speaking of those whose interests are opposed to ours with discretion, and in honest terms. He shall have a peculiar care in advancing nothing but that could be duly proved.

He must note previously that the company having bought from the succession of Lord Selkirk, his rights upon this Colony, we do consider the same Company as being obliged to fulfil the contracts of it, and to promote the prosperity of the said Colony.

He shall represent:—

1st. That several individuals are complaining that the Company have obliged them to pay lands without giving them any contract in legal form, and in spite of their will, the officers of the Company retaining upon the wages of their servants the price of the same lands, which price has been placed, not in the municipal trunk [bank], but in that of the Company. Is it, then, that the Company might have the property of the lands? This appears to us inseparably united to the rights of the Crown.

2d. The Company gives in circulation bills, the exchange thereof cannot be received but in London, a thing which is impossible to the greatest number of us. Could we not have a right to require that exchange of them be done in the country, and in the most central part of the colony?\*

3dly. Already the Chief Factor, named Governor of the Assiniboine, has made us understand that he might suddenly stop the course of the money papers, which would expose us to losses, and occasion great difficulties in our transactions. In order to avoid a danger of which we have threatened, and that the least pretext in a quick-minded man might lead to execution, the Commissioner shall invoke the influence of his Lordship in order to obtain that silver money be put in course in this country; the bank-houses, or Company house being too far off from us.

4thly. Le portage of certain goods on the Company's ship having been refused, under eluding pretexts, and with the visible end of discouraging; could not the Company be obliged to take on their bond everything that would be exported from the Colony at the risk and expenses of private traders? Seeing that the Company's exclusive right to the only important branch of commerce until now<sup>\*\*</sup> take off for another ship a chance of an advantageous load, when it would consist in articles exclusive from furs.

5thly. That if the Company must have for some time again the exclusive right in the trade of this country, would it not be a duty of justice that they would be obliged to purchase, at reasonable prices, all that the inhabitants have to sell, and does it not look unjust, that having kept exclusively for them all the advantages, they could not be obliged to take the changes?

6thly. The same exclusive right would seem to put us in reason to require from the Company to bring to the shop of the colony the things necessary, and in a sufficient quantity for the want of the inhabitants; then it is common to us wanting things the most important to life in this country; viz. gunpowder, thread for nets, tea, &c., the same articles being sometimes taken off from the colony-shop to be transported to trade-posts, afar, and even on the American territory, and thus to the great discontent of the settlers.

7thly. We think the Company is guilty of an abuse in extending their claims as far as to forbid to the inhabitants of this country to exchange between themselves furs; and we believe that they have acted unjustly by confining in gaol individuals who were not attempting, who had not even the idea to take off from the country the furs that they had, and also in putting under a caution and seizing the goods imported under that pretext that they were intended to be exchanged for furs. We had believed that in law we could not be punished for the intention, but the infraction of the law only could deserve punishment.

8thly. That the wise laws forbidding to deliver intoxicating liquors to the Indians being in force amongst the settlers, we feel it repugnant to see an exception for the Company in the penalties of that law; that it would be forbidden to the settlers to sell beer to the Indians under penalty of fine, and that the Company be free to sell strong liquors to the same Indians. That partiality excites indignation against the legislators.

9thly. The Commissioner shall beseech his Lordship to supply by his credit to the wants of formalities from the part of a people which lives too far off to be aware of them, and to have the goodness to do so that the attention of our good Queen be rather fixed upon the truth of our observations, and the sincere intention that we have to keep the peace, and spare the life of her devoted subjects.

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In support of the foregoing statements, we append the following extracts from the published works of Mr. Alexander Simpson and the Rev. Herbert Beaver relating to the condition of the Hudson's Bay Company's territories, corroborating in the strongest manner the grievances so simply and temperately complained of by the petitioners. Mr. Simpson was 14 years in the service of the Company, in which he rose to be a chief trader or partner, and is still, it is believed, a shareholder in the concern. The Rev. Mr. Beaver resided for some time

on

\* The Company allow no gold or silver money to circulate in their territories; what little finds its way into the country from the United States is carefully drained off every year, and shipped to England. The only circulating medium consists in promissory notes, which, by a wretched mockery, are payable in London only, to people who can never go there. As a great proportion of the Company's retired servants settle in the Red River Colony, their hard earnings are paid off in these notes. By the artifice of making them payable in London only, the Company are enabled to clear off all demands upon them in the shape of servant's wages, for the mere cost of the printing of the notes.

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on the North-west Coast (the Oregon territory), and is described by Sir George Simpson as "another of the Company's chaplains, under whom missions and schools had been established at several of their depôts or posts on the Columbia River." It is but fair to hear Mr. Beaver's own account of his interesting labours; and it only remains to add, that both these gentlemen left the country subsequently to the date of the Reports of Sir George Simpson and Sir J. H. Pelly, with which their statements are here contrasted:—

**EXTRACTS** from the Reports of Sir J. H. Pelly and Sir G. Simpson, Governors of the Hudson's Bay Company, submitted to the British Government on applying for the Renewal of the exclusive License of the Company in 1837.—Printed by order of the House of Commons, 8 August 1842.

"DURING the competition in trade previous to the year 1821 (when the exclusive management fell into the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company), it was found impossible to take any effectual measure towards the civilization or moral and religious improvement of the native population. Since that period the Company have established two Protestant missions under the management of their chaplains, at Red River settlement, where there are likewise two Catholic missions and 13 schools."—*Report of Sir G. Simpson*, p. 16.

"It is gratifying to be able to say that the zealous endeavours of our missionaries have been most successful."—*Ibid.*

"The Hudson's Bay Company have likewise established missions and schools at several of the principal depôts or posts on the Columbia River, west side of the Rocky Mountains, under the management of another of their chaplains."—(Mr. Beaver, the only clergyman who ever entered that part of the Company's territories. His own somewhat different account of his labours will be found in the opposite column.)

"We are using our utmost endeavours in every other part of the country, where the climate and soil admit of it, to collect the Indians into villages, and direct their attention to agriculture, as the first step towards civilization."—*Ibid.*

"I have no hesitation in saying that the native population of the countries through which the Hudson's Bay Company's business extends, never derived any real benefit from their intercourse with the whites until the fur trade became exercised under the existing license. In proof of this, the population of some of the tribes, previous to that time sensibly diminishing, is now increasing."—*Reports of Sir G. Simpson*, p. 17.

"The employment we afford at those seasons to many of the Indians, whereby they are brought into frequent communication and intercourse with the officers and servants,

**EXTRACTS** from the Life of *Thomas Simpson*, by his Brother Alexander Bentley, New Burlington-street, 1845; and a Letter of the Rey. Herbert Beaver relating to the Indians on the North-west Coast of America, to the Aborigines Protection Society.—*Tracts Relating to the Aborigines*. Marsh, 84, Houndsditch, 1842.

"This extensive field for missionary enterprise (the Hudson's Bay territories) was unoccupied, until the year 1839, when the attention of the Wesleyan Conference of Canada was directed towards it."—A. Simpson, p. 432.

"From time to time, I reported to the Governor and Committee of the Company in England, and to the Governor and Council of the Company abroad, the result of my observations for an immediate attempt at the introduction of civilization and Christianity among one or more of the aboriginal tribes, but my earnest representations were neither attended to nor acted upon.

"Although the Hudson's Bay Company owes its entire prosperity, nay, its very existence, to commerce with the natives of the well-nigh unlimited territory over which it exercises a nearly uncontrolled sway, yet little has hitherto been done by the Company on the east side of the Rocky Mountains, and nothing on the west side, towards advancing in the scale of creation the innumerable tribes of untold rational and immortal beings whose most important destinies have for the last 170 years been placed in its hands."—Beaver, p. 16.

"With the exception of those placed on the confines of civilization, and the few located at Red River colony, none have, until a very recent period, heard of Christianity; save perhaps accidentally, from traders whose lives but little accorded with its precepts."—A. Simpson, p. 431.

"God knows that I speak the conviction of my mind, and may He forgive me if I speak unadvisedly when I state my firm belief, that the life of an Indian was never yet, by a trapper put in competition with a beaver skin."—Beaver, p. 19.

"I cannot close this description of the character and condition of a much injured, much neglected, and therefore, rapidly decreasing branch of the great family of mankind, without quoting the following remarks on the proper conduct of white men towards savages (of all regions), which were addressed to me by an associated body of French Philanthropists (far different, alas! is the general conduct of the French nation)."—A. Simpson, p. 432.

"It is an observation never more truly exemplified than at the Company's settlements, that whenever the Gospel has been carried among modern heathen nations, there simultaneously

## Extracts from Reports, &amp;c.—continued.

servants, tends towards their gradual civilization and improvement; and we find our own interests promoted by an equitable and liberal system of trade and management.”—*Report of Sir G. Simpson.*

## Extracts from Life, &amp;c.—continued.

simultaneously has vice, before unknown, been imported. Assuredly the Indians saw no recommendation of religion in the example of the generality of the Company’s servants, with whom its precepts seemed to be in total abeyance.”—*Beaver*, p. 18.

“An awful fatality seems to overhang the retiring members of the Company, a punishment for the unprincipled and licentious lives they have led.”—*A. Simpson*, p. 81.

“I also became acquainted with many acts of cruelty and murder committed upon the natives by persons in the Company’s service, some of which I narrated by letter to the Deputy-governor of the Company at home, and to the Governor of the Company’s foreign possessions, in the hope that a stop might be put to the recurrence of these horrible atrocities; but from both I incurred a rebuke for my undue interference in matters which did not professionally concern me.”—*Beaver*, p. 16.

“On the banks of the Columbia, we are directing our attention to agriculture on a large scale.

“I have also the satisfaction to say, that the native population are beginning to profit by our example, as many formerly dependent on hunting and fishing now maintain themselves by the produce of the soil.”—*Report of Sir G. Simpson.*

proprietors or relations, and by their purchasers. But I forbear to add more upon this part of my subject, having communicated full information respecting it to the Committee of the Anti-Slavery Convention, by whom my communication has been published.”—*Beaver*.

“The employment we afford at those seasons to many of the Indians, whereby they are brought into frequent communication and intercourse with our officers and servants, tends towards their gradual civilization and improvement; and we find our own interests promoted by an equitable and liberal system of trade and management.”—*Report of Sir G. Simpson.*

One great cause of the immorality at the place where I was stationed, and a consequent barrier to the improvement and conversion of the Indians, was the holding of some of them in a state of slavery by persons of all classes in the Company’s service, and by those who have retired from it, and become settlers on the rivers Willamette and Cowlitz, but over whom the Company retain authority. The women, themselves, who were living with the lower class of the Company’s servants, were much in the condition of slaves, being purchased of their Indian not unfrequently re-sold amongst each other.

But I forbear to add more upon this part of my subject, having communicated full information respecting it to the Committee of the Anti-Slavery Convention, by whom my communication has been published.”—*Beaver*, p. 10.

“With respect to the furs of that country, to rob their lawful owner of them by taking possession of them either with no payment, or with a most inadequate one, is surely not a legitimate method of teaching him their proper use and value. Of articles bartered by the Company for peltry and other native produce, one-half may be classed as useless, one-quarter as pernicious, and the remainder as of doubtful utility.”—*Beaver*, p. 10.

“The prices paid to the natives for their furs are, in general, exceedingly small.

Throughout the whole of the protected territories, the value of goods bartered for furs is certainly under one-twentieth of the value of these furs in England.”—*A. Simpson*, p. 427.

“The principal benefit the Company derive from the exclusive license of trade, is the peaceable occupation of their own proper territory, from which they draw nearly the whole of the profits of their trade, and for the protection of which they have a right to look to Government in common with the rest of Her Majesty’s subjects, as the trade of the country embraced in the Royal License is, as yet, of very little benefit to them, and affords greater advantages to the mother country in the employment of shipping, and in the revenue arising from imports and exports, than the Company derive from it.”\*—*Sir J. H. Pelly’s Report*, p. 26.

The entire value of all the furs and other articles traded by the Company from the Indians in all its territories and possessions, average less than 200,000*l.* per annum. In one year it amounted to 211,000*l.*, and the net profits for that year were declared at 119,000*l.*”—*Ibid.* p. 428.

\* The Company annually fit out one ship of about 300 tons burthen to the territories here spoken of, and from it are derived those “great advantages to the mother country, in the employment of shipping,” which

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The following extracts from works of an earlier date, taken in connexion with the foregoing statements of Beaver and Simpson, show that the policy of the Hudson's Bay Company towards the natives has been, throughout, such as above described by these authors:—

"The Company find the profits arising from that inconsiderable part of the produce of this country which they have monopolised, so enormous, that, while they are resolved to be undisturbed in the possession, they can have no motive to increase them, but are rather induced to prevent this as an evil that would endanger the loss of the whole. From hence, perhaps, proceeds that vigorous exertion of their art and power to keep all their servants, except the chief factors and the captains of their ships, totally ignorant both of the country and trade; hence their treatment of the natives, which, so far from aiming at instructing their minds and reforming their manners, is made up of cruelty to their persons, impositions upon their ignorance or their necessity, and a fomentation of a spirit of discord among them, that in time must destroy them all."—*Robson's Account of a Six Years' Residence in Hudson's Bay*, 8vo. London, 1752, p. 74.

"During the long time in which the Company have been in possession, they have not once attempted to civilize the manners or inform the understandings of the natives; neither instructed them in the great principles and duties of piety."—*Ibid.* p. 82.

"The instances of neglect and abuse of the natives are so gross, that they would scarcely gain credit even among uncivilized barbarians who never heard of the mild precepts of Christianity. Besides the facts already mentioned, the following one was well attested by the servants of the Bay, and was also produced in evidence before the Committee [of the House of Commons]:—An Indian boy at Moose factory, being taught to read and write through the humanity and indulgence of a governor there, wrote over to the Company for leave to come to England, in order that he might be baptized; but upon the receipt of his request, which any man who had the least sense of religion, and the least regard for the spiritual happiness of a fellow-creature, would with joy have complied with, an order was sent to the governor to take the boy's books from him, and turn him out of the factory, with an express prohibition against any Indians being instructed for the future. This was the source of much affliction to the poor boy, who died soon after, with a penitence and devotion that would have done honour to his masters. But from whence can such preposterous and unnatural behaviour take its rise, unless from the apprehension that if the natives were properly instructed and made converts to Christianity, they would all claim the privileges of British subjects, and apply to Britain to be supported in them? The Company, therefore, to prevent their suffering a remote evil as traders, have violated their indispensable duty as men and Christians."—*Robson*, p. 77.

"When we recollect that this country has been in the hands of an incorporated Company for upwards of 113 years, and compare the few discoveries that have been made during that period with those made in other parts; when we reflect how little we are acquainted with its soil or productions, and how ignorant we are with respect to its capability of improvement; when we further consider that no care has been taken to cultivate a reciprocal friendship with remote nations of Indians; but, on the contrary, that those we are already acquainted with have been vitiated by the introduction of spirituous liquors, and disgusted by ill-usage; such reflections naturally excite in the bosom of every one that has the good of their country at heart, a wish that so extensive and improveable a country were in the possession of those who would take more pains to render it more beneficial to the mother country."—*Umfreville's Present State of Hudson's Bay*, p. 102. London, 1790.

The following instance of barbarity, related by Lieutenant Chappell, R.N., of his Majesty's ship "Rosamond," in his "Narrative of a Voyage to Hudson's Bay," would appear incredible, did it not rest, to use his own expression, on "the most indubitable authority":—

"When first the Europeans (the agents of the Hudson's Bay Company) went to settle at Richmond (a whaling station on the coast, which was shortly afterwards abandoned), the Esquimaux, who reside about this part, kept them in a continued state of alarm all the winter, by lurking about the woods in their sledges drawn by dogs. At length an English boy was missing from the settlement, and after some difficulty, two Esquimaux were seized and confined in separate apartments. In order to recover the absent youth the settlers made use of a stratagem. A musket was discharged in a remote apartment, and the settlers entering the room in which one of the Esquimaux was confined, they informed him by signs that his comrade had been put to death for decoying away the boy, and they gave him to understand, at the same time, that he must prepare to undergo the same fate, unless he would faithfully pledge himself to restore the absentee. The Esquimaux naturally promised everything, and on being set at liberty he made the best of his way into the woods, and,

Sir John Pelly describes. As there is no duty on furs, and all the exciseable articles sent out to the country are purchased in bond, the total revenue Great Britain derives "from exports and imports," and every other source, amounts to the sum of 5s. annually, paid as "rent" into Her Majesty's Treasury every 1st of June.

and, of course, was never afterwards heard of. They kept the other native for some time a prisoner; at length he tried to effect his escape by boldly seizing the sentinel's firelock at night, but the piece accidentally going off, he was so terrified at the report that they easily replaced him in confinement; yet, either the loss of liberty, a supposition that his countryman had been murdered, or that he was himself reserved for some cruel death, deprived the poor wretch of reason. As he became exceedingly troublesome, the settlers held a conference as to the most eligible mode of getting rid of him; and it being deemed good policy to deter the natives from similar offences by making an example, they accordingly shot the poor maniac in cold blood, without having given themselves the trouble to ascertain whether he was really guilty or innocent."—*Narrative of a Voyage to Hudson's Bay, by Lieut. Chappell, R. N.*, p. 156. London, 1817.

The instances of similar atrocity which may be adduced would fill a volume, but limited space will not admit of more than a concluding extract from the work of Mr. Beaver, already alluded to, with which these appalling details will be closed:

"About the middle of the summer 1836, and shortly before my arrival at Vancouver, six Indians were wantonly and gratuitously murdered by a party of trappers and sailors, who landed for the purpose from one of the Company's vessels, on the coast somewhere between the mouth of the river Columbia and the confines of California. Having on a former occasion read the particulars of this horrid massacre, as I received them from an eye-witness, before a meeting of the Aborigines' Society, I will not now repeat them. To my certain knowledge, the circumstance was brought officially before the authorities of Vancouver, by whom no notice was taken of it, and the same party of trappers, with the same leader, one of the most infamous murderers of a murderous fraternity, is annually sent to the same vicinity, to perform, if they please, other equally tragic scenes."

"In the former part of the same year, I was credibly informed that the same party killed one Indian, wounded another, supposed mortally, and threw a child into a fire, in consequence of a quarrel respecting a knife, which was afterwards found upon one of themselves. And during the year before, they put four Indians to death for stealing their horses, which might be pleaded as some excuse for the brutality, but that they afterwards killed 10 or 12 more in cold blood, and set fire to their village."

"Since writing the above," he adds at the end of his communication, "I have learned from good authority, that in the month of August 1840, an Indian was hanged near the mouth of the Columbia River, and several others shot, and their village set on fire by a party in the employment of the Hudson's Bay Company, under the command of Chief Factor M'Loughlin, who led them from Fort Vancouver, thus indiscriminately to revenge the death of a man who lost his life in an affray while curing salmon."

Do not these things, as Mr. Beaver himself elsewhere asks, imperatively demand inquiry and interference? Is not such treatment as has been narrated of their red brethren unbecoming to persons who profess the religion of the Prince of Peace, and to persons who, ignorant themselves of the precepts of Christianity, may be in the service of such professors?

#### PRICES paid to the INDIANS for their FURS.

SIR J. H. Pelly, in his Report to the Lords of the Committee of the Privy Council for Trade, already quoted, states that the "trade of the country embraced in the Royal License is as yet of very little benefit to the Company," and affords greater advantage to the mother country than to them. The annexed tariff, exhibiting at once the articles supplied, and the prices paid to the Indians inhabiting that territory for their furs, will show that whatever may be the cause of the limited profits derived from this trade, it cannot be attributed to any undue liberality in the remuneration afforded to the natives. The tariff here given is that, with a few trifling local modifications, employed over the whole of the licensed country east of the Rocky Mountains, embracing a very great extent of territory.

It may be mentioned that 33 1-3 d. per cent. on the prime cost of the goods is considered by the Company to cover the expenses of freight, &c. to the country. The selling prices of the different skins are extracted from a table given by Mr. Murray, in his work on British North America, in the series of the "Edinburgh Cabinet Library," based on a list "obligingly furnished by the Company themselves," as a fair indication of the average prices of furs in the market.

A comparison of this tariff, with the earlier lists of Umfreville and others, shows anything but an improvement in the hard terms which, under the circumstances of the country, may be said to be forced on the Indians.

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TARIFF employed in the Territory embraced within the Royal License situated East of the Rocky Mountains.

Prime Cost.	Articles supplied to the Indians.	Beaver Skins.		Martin Skins.		Silver Fox Skins.		Lynx Skins.		Otter Skins.	
		No.	Value.	No.	Value.	No.	Value.	No.	Value.	No.	Value.
22	1 Gun	20	£. s. d.	60	£. s. d.	5	£. s. d.	20	£. s. d.	20	£. s. d.
- 14	1 Gill of Powder	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6	4	2 10 -	1	1 -	1	1 3 6
- 13	18 Leaden Bullets	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6	2/10	1	1	1 -	1	1 3 6
- 1	8 Charges of Shot	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6	2/10	1	1	1 -	1	1 3 6
- 1	10 Gun Flints	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6	2 10	1	1	1 -	1	1 3 6
1. 6	1 Axe	3	4 17 6	9	6 19 6	7 10	3	3	3 -	3	3 10 6
12	1 Copper Kettle (6 gal.)	16	26 -	48	37 4 -	40	16	16	16 -	16	18 16 -
- 2	1 Fire Steel	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6	2 10	1	1	1 -	1	1 3 6
- 4	1 Scalping Knife	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6	2 19	1	1	1 -	1	1 3 6
- 6	1 File (8 inch)	2	3 5 -	6	4 13 -	5	2	2	2 -	2	2 7 -
9	Tobacco Box and Burning Glass	2	3 5 -	6	4 13 -	5	2	2	2 -	2	2 7 -
- 2	1 Common Horn Comb	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6	2 10	1	1	1 -	1	1 3 6
- 24	8 Awls	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6	2 10	1	1	1 -	1	1 3 6
33	1 Dozen Brass Buttons	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6	2 10	1	1	1 -	1	1 3 6
3	12 Brass Finger Rings	2	3 5 -	6	4 13 -	5	2	2	2 -	2	2 7 -
- 1	6 Clay Tobacco Pipes	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6	2 10	1	1	1 -	1	1 3 6
- 4	1 Paper Mounted Mirror	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6	2 10	1	1	1 -	1	1 3 6
- 10	1 lb. Beads	6	9 15 -	18	13 19 -	15	6	6	6 -	6	7 1 -
34	6 oz. Tobacco	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6	2 10	1	1	1 -	1	1 3 6
5 92	1 Blanket (3 point) plain Ditto striped	10	16 5 -	30	28 5 -	25	10	10	10 -	10	11 15 -
7	Man's Slop Coat (large)	12	19 10 -	36	27 18 -	30	12	12	12 -	12	14 2 -
12	Boy's ditto (largest)	5	8 2 6	15	11 12 6	30	12	12	12 -	12	14 2 -
5 3	6 Yards Gartering	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6	12 10	5	5	5 -	5	5 17 6
6 6	1 Pair of Trowsers	9	14 12 6	27	20 18 6	2 10	1	1	1 -	1	1 8 6
1 9	1 Shirt (Cotton)	3	4 17 6	9	6 19 6	22 10	9	9	9 -	9	10 11 6
- 43	1 Handkerchief (Cotton)	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6	7 10	3	3	3 -	3	3 10 6
- 3	1 Oz. Vermilion	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6	2 10	1	1	1 -	1	1 3 6
- 4	1 Pint of Rum (watered)	1	1 12 6	3	2 6 6	2 10	1	1	1 -	1	1 3 6

See corroboration of this Tariff, "Observations," page 67, and Appendix No. 28, 29, 30 and 31.

THE subjoined document has never before appeared in print, its existence having been not even suspected by the British Government. It was passed in the second year of the reign of William and Mary, A.D. 1690, and was intituled—

"AN ACT for confirming to the Governor and Company trading to Hudson's Bay their Privileges and Trade."

(Copied verbatim from the Rolls of Chancery.)

"FORASMUCH as his late Majesty King Charles the Second, by his Letters Patent or Charter under the Great Seal of England, bearing date the second day of May, in the two-and-twentieth year of his reign, reciting, or taking notice, that his then Highness Prince Rupert, Christopher Duke of Albemarle, William Earl of Craven, and divers other Lords therein particularly named had, at their own great costs and charges, undertaken an expedition to Hudson's Bay, in the north-west parts of America, for the discovery of a new passage into the South Seas, and for finding some trade for furs, minerals and other considerable commodities, and that by such their undertaking they had made such discoveries whereby might probably arise much advantage to his said Majesty and this kingdom; for which, and for other reasons and motives in the said charter mentioned, his said late Majesty was graciously pleased thereby to incorporate, create and make the said Prince Rupert, Duke of Albemarle, Earl of Craven, and other the Lords and persons therein particularly named, and such others as should be admitted into the Society (as therein is mentioned), one body corporate and politic in deed and name, by the name of the Governor and Company of Adventurers of England, trading into Hudson's Bay, and by that name to have perpetual succession, and to sue and be sued, take, purchase or grant; and by the said letters patent or charter of incorporation provision was made, as well for the appointment and constitution of the first and present, as well as for the choosing, appointing and admitting of all future governors, deputy-governors, committees, members and officers of the said Company, and for the making of laws, constitutions and ordinances, and for the government of the said Company and trade, and otherwise, and the sole trade and commerce of all these seas, streights, bays, lakes, rivers, creeks and sounds, in whatsoever latitude they shall be, that are within the entrance of the streights commonly called Hudson's Streights, together with all the lands and the territories upon the countries, coasts and confines of the seas, bays, lakes, rivers, creeks and sounds aforesaid, which were not then actually possessed by or granted to any of his said late Majesty's subjects, or possessed by the subjects of any other Christian prince or state, with divers and sundry privileges, liberties, jurisdictions, franchises, powers and authorities to punish offenders, and to sue for and recover penalties, with other powers and authorities, matters and things, in the said letters patent or charter of incorporation mentioned and expressed, were thereby granted to and vested in the same said Company and their successors for ever, in such sort, manner and form as in and by the said charter

charter or letters patent, and enrolment thereof, is mentioned and expressed, and as thereby more fully appears: And forasmuch as the said Governor and Company, at their great charges and with much difficulty and hazard, have settled and made great improvements of the trade to the said seas, streights and places aforesaid, which as now and for several years past hath been found to be useful and profitable to this kingdom and the navigation thereof for furs, minerals and other considerable commodities; and it appearing that the said trade cannot be carried on or managed so advantageously either to the honour or interest of this realm as in a company and with a joint stock; and it being necessary that such a company should have sufficient and undoubted powers and authorities, privileges and liberties to manage, order and carry on the said trade, and to make bye-laws, orders, rules and constitutions for the due management and regulation as well of the said Company as trade, and for the punishment of offenders, and recovering of forfeitures and penalties, which cannot be so effectually done as by authority of Parliament: be it therefore enacted, by the King and Queen's most excellent Majesties, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, that the present Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, and their successors, shall at all times from henceforth stand, continue and be a body politic and corporate in deed and name, by the name aforesaid, and according to the purport and effect of the said letters patent or charter hereinbefore mentioned; and that the said letters patent or charter hereinbefore mentioned, bearing date the said second day of May, in the two-and-twentieth year of the reign of his said late Majesty King Charles the Second, and all things therein contained, be, and by virtue of this present Act shall be from henceforth ratified, established and confirmed unto the present Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay, and to their successors for ever, and also that the said Governor and Company and their successors shall and may have, do, use, exercise and enjoy all and singular the liberties, privileges, powers, authorities, matters and things in the said letters patent or charter mentioned to be granted to them, and also that the said letters patent or charter, and all and every the liberties, franchises, immunities, privileges, jurisdictions, powers, authorities, royalties, hereditaments, matters and things whatsoever, and of what nature or kind soever thereby given, granted or demitted, or mentioned to be given, granted or demitted to the said Prince Rupert, Duke of Albemarle, Earl of Craven and other the Lords and persons therein particularly named, and thereby incorporated, and to the Governor and Company thereby created, made or erected, and to their successors, and to all governors, deputy-governors, committees and other members, officers and servants, of or upon the said Governor and Company for the time being, and their successors, or otherwise. Howsoever, with and under such restraints and prohibitions, and subject and liable to such forfeitures and remedies for recovering thereof, as in the said Charter are contained, shall from henceforth be good and effectual, and available in the law, and to all intents, constructions and purposes to the aforesaid new Governor and Company and their successors for evermore, and shall and may be by the new Governor and Company and their successors from time to time for ever hereafter holden and enjoyed, and put in execution after and according to the form, words, sentences, purport, effect and true meaning of the said letters patent or charter, and that as amply, fully and largely, to all intents, constructions, and purposes; as if the same letters patent or charter, and the general matters and things therein mentioned, and thereby granted or mentioned to be granted, were word for word recited and set down at large in this present Act of Parliament, any law, statute, usage, custom or other matter or thing to the contrary notwithstanding. Provided always, and be it further enacted, by the authority aforesaid, that the said Governor and Company shall make at least two public sales of coat beaver in every year, and not exceeding four, and that they shall proportion the same into lots each of about 100*l.* sterling, but not exceeding 200*l.* value; and that in the intervals of public sales the said Company may not sell coat beaver by private contract, and at any lower price than it was set up at the last public sale, and that the coat beaver now in the Company's hands shall be liable to the same rules. Provided always, that this Act shall continue and be in force for the time of seven years, and from thence to the end of the next Session of Parliament and no longer."

Mr. Robson gives the following account of the passing of the Act, which will be found to perfectly explain away any contradictions apparent in it:—

"It being alleged in the Committee [of the House of Commons], that the Company's Charter was confirmed by Act of Parliament, the Lords' and Commons' Journals were inspected; from which it appeared, that in 1690, the Company, sensible that they had no legal title to their monopoly, petitioned the Commons for a Bill to confirm their charter, upon account of the great losses they had sustained from the French, and their having no right to restrain English interlopers.

"Accordingly, a Bill for a perpetual confirmation was brought into the House, but upon a petition against the Bill from the furriers, and afterwards from the northern colonies of America, some of which came too late to be heard, at the third reading a rider was proposed to make it temporary, and upon a division whether for seven or ten years, it was carried for the latter; but the Lords returning it amended, by inserting seven years instead of ten, the Commons agreed to the amendment, and passed the Bill. The Commons, however, to prevent their being surprised into such an act for the future, came to a resolution, which was made a Standing Order of the House, that no petition should be received for confirming the charter, unless the charter itself was annexed to the petition."

"The Act for confirming the Company's charter," he continues, "expired above 50 years ago.

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ago. They have not had the assurance to apply for a renewal, and yet have been mean enough to keep the absolute possession of what they knew was become the property of the nation."

The foregoing statements are sufficiently indicative of the lamentable results of the monopoly established by the Hudson's Bay Company, both with reference to the natives of Rupert's Land, and the interests of the mother country; and it is sincerely to be desired that the Legislature should open its eyes to the policy of introducing a healthier system, namely by throwing open trade to those territories over which the Company exercise their illegal jurisdiction. The advantages of such a course are manifest; first, in the facilities which the occupancy of settlements on the sea-coast would afford to our rapidly declining whale fisheries; secondly, in the opening of a new channel for British enterprise and employment of capital, by working the valuable mines of silver, lead and copper, especially the two latter, in which the country is known to abound; thirdly, by the establishing of salmon, porpoise, and seal fisheries along the coast; fourthly, by leasing, or letting as pasture lands, until the country could be brought into more general cultivation, the extensive plains which now support thousands of droves of wild buffaloes and horses; fifthly, the establishing of a good export trade in wood, tallow, hides, wool, corn and other natural productions of the country—sources of revenue which the Company wholly neglect, modestly contenting themselves with the enormous profits accruing to them from their exclusive trade in furs. But apart from the political and commercial importance of the subject to the British Government, the condition of the natives is even more deserving of its attention. When we assert that they are steeped in ignorance, debased in mind, and crushed in spirit; that by the exercise of an illegal claim over the country of their forefathers, they are deprived of the natural rights and privileges of free-born men, that they are virtually slaves, as absolutely as the unredeemed negro population of the slave states of America; that by a barbarous and selfish policy, founded on a love of lucre, their affections are alienated from the British name and Government, and they themselves shut out from civilization, and debarred from every incentive thereto; that the same heinous system is gradually effacing whole tribes from the soil on which they were born and nurtured, so that a few years hence not one man from among them will be left to point out where the bones of his ancestors repose. When we assert all this in honest, simple truth, does it not behove every Christian man to demand that the British Legislature should not continue to incur the fearful responsibility of permitting the extinction of these helpless, forlorn thousands of their fellow creatures, by lending its countenance to a monopoly engendering so huge a mountain of human misery. For the honour of our nature we trust it may not be—for the honour of this great country, we pray it will not be; and, sincerely trust we, some few voices will respond earnestly, Amen.

—No. 18.—

COPY of a LETTER from A. K. Isbister, Esq., to Earl Grey.

77, Jubilee-street, Mile-End-road,

18 December 1847.

My Lord,

In the last communication, dated June 14th,\* which I had the honour to receive from your Lordship, on the subject of the petition addressed to Her Gracious Majesty, from the natives of Rupert's Land, British North America, your Lordship was pleased to express your intention of referring the grievances it set forth to the consideration of the Governor-general of Canada, with instructions for him to prosecute a further inquiry into the matter there.

To the Report of the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company on our memorial, transmitted with the communication referred to, I had likewise the honour of forwarding, shortly after, a full and detailed reply; establishing, I trust to your Lordship's satisfaction, the several allegations of the memorial sought to be impugned in that document.

I trust, it will not be considered obtrusive, if, after this interval, I take the liberty respectfully to inquire whether your Lordship has come to any decision on the subject I have had the honour to bring under your notice.

I have, &c.  
(signed) A. K. Isbister.

No. 18.

A. K. Isbister, Esq.,  
to Earl Grey,  
18 Dec. 1847.

\* Page 50.

—No. 19.—

COPY of a LETTER from B. Hawes, Esq., M.P., to A. K. Isbister, Esq.

Sir,

Downing-street, 2 February 1848.

No. 19.

In answer to your letter of the 18th December, inquiring whether Earl Grey B. Hawes, Esq., M.P., had come to any decision on the complaints preferred by the inhabitants of to A. K. Isbister, Rupert's Esq., 2 Feb. 1848.

## CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO COMPLAINTS OF

Rupert's Land, British North America, of the conduct and administration of the Hudson's Bay Company; I am directed to inform you, that the despatch which his Lordship addressed some months ago to the Governor-general of Canada on this subject has not yet been answered, and that the delay is probably attributable to the wish of the Governor to obtain further information before he transmits his Report. Until the arrival of that Report, Lord Grey cannot decide upon the subject, but his Lordship is in communication with the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, with the view of devising the best mode of instituting an inquiry on the spot into the allegations against the Company.

I have, &c.  
(signed) B. Hawes.

## —No. 20.—

COPY of a LETTER from B. Hawes, Esq., M.P., to Lieutenant-colonel Crofton, Her Majesty's 6th Regiment of Foot, Fermoy.

No. 20.  
B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.,  
to Lieut.-Colonel  
Crofton,  
8 February 1848.

Sir, Downing-street, 8 February 1848.  
In the course of the last year, complaints of a serious nature against the conduct of the Hudson's Bay Company towards the native Indians and inhabitants of Rupert's Land, have been preferred by Mr. A. K. Isbister, in a memorial to the Queen, which he was deputed to bring to this country from British North America. An investigation having accordingly been instituted in this country into these complaints, and proceedings taken for the same purpose in Canada (though the result in that province is not yet known), great difficulty is experienced in arriving at a just conclusion upon them, in consequence of the charges against the Company and their defence both resting, to a great extent, on mere assertion. Under these circumstances, Sir J. Pelly has suggested that the information which you have obtained during your recent residence at Fort Garry, would enable you to furnish Her Majesty's Government with an impartial opinion on the question at issue between the Hudson's Bay Company and the Indians on the Red River, so as to enable Her Majesty's Government to determine whether the complaints against the Company are well founded; and if so, what measures should be taken for affording the Indians redress.

For this purpose I am directed by Earl Grey now to address you, and to send herewith an abstract of the principal charges brought against the Company, together with a copy of the memorial from the Indians, above referred to; and I am to request that you would favour his Lordship with such information on the different points therein mentioned, or on any others bearing on these differences, which it may be in your power to afford.

I have, &c.  
(signed) B. Hawes.

## —No. 21.—

COPY of a LETTER from A. K. Isbister, Esq., to Earl Grey.

No. 21.  
A. K. Isbister, Esq.,  
to Earl Grey,  
February 1848.  
\* Page 97.

77, Jubilee-street, Mile-End-road,  
February 1848.

My Lord,  
I HAVE to acknowledge receipt of a communication, dated 2d instant,\* from Mr. Under-secretary Hawes, stating that your Lordship is in communication with the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, with the view of devising the best mode of instituting an inquiry on the spot into the allegations preferred against that body, by the memorialists from Rupert's Land.

In their name, I beg to express the great satisfaction this information has afforded us, and which, I feel assured, will be shared by the natives of Rupert's Land generally, who will find in this result of their appeal to the justice and protection of the British Government, the best reward of that peaceful and constitutional course they have pursued, in addressing their grievances to your Lordship. Sensible of the great importance of the step your Lordship has taken in reference to the subject of our petition, I feel it necessary, as a point of duty, most respectfully to lay before your Lordship a few of the difficulties against which

the

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the commission of inquiry will have to contend, and of which those unacquainted with the peculiar circumstances of the country and the case may not be fully aware, or be prepared to meet.

1st. The Commissioners will be wholly dependent on the Hudson's Bay Company for the means of conveyance to the various localities beyond the Red River colony where inquiries should be made; the extent and the nature of the interior country; its difficulty of access; the scattered condition of the native population; the great distance of the various posts from one another; the difficulty of procuring the means of subsistence, for which the Commissioners, unless accompanied by persons familiar with the country, must be entirely dependent upon the Company's agents. These facts will leave it clear to your Lordship that the Commissioners will be unable to act independently, and moreover, being the Company's guests, would ultimately feel a delicacy in giving evidence detrimental to their interests.

2d. The fact of the Commissioners coming into the country under the auspices of the Company, will tend materially to diminish the confidence of the Indians in them, who not fully comprehending the difficulties attendant on such an inquiry, would by their distrust, rather defeat than assist its chief object.

3d. The Commissioners being themselves strangers to the country, will be first wholly at a loss in what quarter to apply for information; and, secondly, will possess no other mode of communication with the natives than through the Company's own interpreters.

4th. As the Company have a direct interest in frustrating the object of the proposed inquiry, it is to be apprehended they would adopt active measures to anticipate, if not counteract, it at every point; the readiest means of so doing being obviously at their absolute command.

In support of these objections, and also as some apology for urging them upon your Lordship's consideration, I beg to call your Lordship's attention to the contents of the accompanying letter, which I have just received from one of the clergymen at the Red River colony, and which will serve to show to what arbitrary measures the Company have already resorted in their anxiety to crush inquiry.

It is with the greatest hesitation and diffidence that I venture to approach this subject, but in justice to the interests with which the memorialists are entrusted, and more especially in the absence of Mr. Belcour from the settlement, I cannot hesitate to express my conviction that a commission, wholly under the auspices of the Hudson's Bay Company, cannot but furnish most imperfect and partial results. Under these circumstances, and as a mode of meeting the difficulties which I have thought it my duty to lay before your Lordship, I venture most respectfully to suggest, whether it were not advisable to attach to the commission, with the view of aiding without unduly biassing its inquiries, an individual representing the interests of the petitioners; the Hudson's Bay Company having the privilege, if they desire it, of a similar nomination on their part.

Such an arrangement, in itself equitable to both parties chiefly interested in this appeal, while it would add largely to that satisfaction which your Lordship's measures have inspired, would place at the service of the commission that knowledge of the country and of existing abuses, which the peculiar circumstances of the case render necessary to a full and satisfactory investigation.

As I have not received any communication on the subject of the reply to the Report of the Hudson's Bay Company which I had the honour to forward to your Lordship in the month of August last, I shall take an early opportunity of laying another copy, with some later details, before your Lordship.

I have, &c.

(signed) A. K. Isbister.

Enclosure in No. 21.

TRANSLATION of a Letter from the Rev. Mr. Belcour to Mr. A. K. Isbister.

Quebec, Lower Canada, 21 December 1847.

Sir,  
As I was leaving the Red River at the end of October last, I had the pleasure to catch a hasty and partial glance at your pamphlet on the subject of the petition of the inhabitants of the Red River district against certain proceedings of the Hudson's Bay Company. As I do not find a single copy of it in this place, you will confer a favour on me by sending me a few impressions of it, so that I may be enabled to make the Archbishop of Quebec perfectly

Encl. in No. 21.

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feely acquainted with the matter. I ought to tell you, that for the sake of peace I have been obliged to take this step. I believe that I both may and ought, conscientiously and lawfully take it. Of two evils one must choose the less; and it was necessary for me either to consent to become a witness to the excesses of an outraged and irritated people, or to consent, by drawing up this petition, to expose myself to the animadversions of the Company. I now endure this animosity on the part of the Governor, who, far from acknowledging the good services that I have really rendered, by preventing the shedding of blood, by means of my influence with the people, persecutes me to the uttermost. What you have learned, as well from the petition itself as from the instructions placed in the hands of Mr. James Sinclair, the Commissioner, contains nothing but truths verified by facts. It is perhaps for this reason that the Company finds it so difficult a task to defend itself. The Governor, Sir George Simpson, having complained of this step, as regards myself, to the Archbishop of Quebec, has gone so far as to tell his Grace that he demanded my recall to Canada; failing which, he threatened to let the effect of his resentment fall on all the clergy of the Red River. Now, by recalling me, or causing me to be recalled, he prevents, as much as in him lies, the advancement of civilization among the Indians. Having been for 17 years a missionary in this country, I have acquired a knowledge of the languages of the people. I now find myself forced to leave these missions desolate, there being no missionary acquainted with the native tongues to take my place. If I have done wrong in advising the colonists to present a petition, why do they satisfy themselves by exposing my culpability? And if the Company have actual rights, which are unjustly disputed, why do they not demonstrate them, without heaping their vengeance on an individual who has done them important service in similar troubles, and who, by his influence over the people, might, in case of need, arrest the progress of disorder? They ought to know, that in order to manage a populace, or whole people, it is necessary to show them that we are seeking their interest, without which conviction on their part it is impossible to direct them; that if in doing this we have clashed with the interest of some body of men, or some individual, it is only an accidental collision, or at times, an inevitable consequence in affairs of a critical character. It remains for the parties injured to protest and to prove against the measures which have injured it. I have thought that, considering the interest you have taken in this affair, to the great satisfaction of this people, you will feel affected by the proceeding of Sir George Simpson, which surprises me so much the more, as I thought him more capable of generous sentiments, and more grateful for services conferred; for if his heart were as generous even as men in general, he would have remembered that day in which he came, escorted by the leading men of the country, to seek me in my poor cottage to appease the troubles of the time, and to facilitate those measures that he looked upon as necessary to the security of his own life. But such is the misery of man, that, however devoted he may become, he will sometimes commit those littlenesses. *Omnis homo mendax.*

You will afford me real pleasure by relating to me all that has been written in England on this business. I am tenderly attached to the poor people, who on their part were in despair at my departure; and this, nevertheless, without wishing ill to the Company, anxious only to regard, as the error of its officers, the unjust acts which are committed here, being, in fact, unable to believe that an intention to oppress the weak can exist in so respectable a body.

If you think it advisable that this letter should be published, I shall be very glad, in order that the truth may be known.

I am, &c.

(signed) G. A. Belcour.

P.S.—You may address your letter, if you honour me with one, to Quebec, to the care of the Rev. Charles F. Cazeau, Secretary to the Archbishop of Quebec.

G. A. B.

No. 22.

B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.,  
to A. K. Isbister,  
Esq.,  
17 February 1848.

\* Page 98.

— No. 22. —

COPY of a LETTER from B. Hawes, Esq., M. P., to A. K. Isbister, Esq.

Sir,

I AM directed by Earl Grey to acknowledge your letter received at this office on the 12th\* instant, and to observe, that you are under a mistake in supposing that Her Majesty's Government contemplate the appointment of a "Commission of Inquiry" into the allegations against the Hudson's Bay Company. Lord Grey thinks it material to state, distinctly, that no such intention is expressed in the letter addressed to you from this office, on the 2d instant.

I have, &c.

(signed) B. Hawes.

— No. 23. —

THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 101

— No. 23. —

COPY of a LETTER from Lieutenant-Colonel Crofton to B. Hawes, Esq., M. P.

Sir,

Fermoy, 12 February 1848.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th\* instant, and in obedience to the directions of Earl Grey, I herewith enclose such information on the points referred to me, as my residence in Prince Rupert's Land enables me to furnish.

My opinions on those points have not been hastily formed, though they are promptly communicated.

The memorial to Her Majesty originated among one or two discontented men at Red River, who, from the period of the rebellion in Canada, were ever forward to create disloyal feelings in the half-breed race, and induce them, in the event of war, to throw off allegiance to Her Majesty. This desire largely prevailed, except among the Scotch settlers, until the arrival of Her Majesty's troops convinced these deluded men that their attempts would be frustrated. In less than a year these very men became loud in their loyalty, and in condemnation of their own former folly, and that of those who still yearned for republican government.

I had the best opportunities for learning directly, and through the officers of the troops, the opinions of all classes respecting the Hudson's Bay Company's government; and I have never heard of the charges being designated otherwise than as false, which accompanied your letter, although I was aware that a memorial to Her Majesty had been got up, and that even a petition to Congress of the United States had been sent to Washington, and there refused to be presented, stating those charges.

I unhesitatingly assert, that the government of the Hudson's Bay Company is mild and protective, and admirably adapted, in my opinion, for the state of society existing in Prince Rupert's Land, where Indians, half-breeds and Europeans are happily governed, and live protected by laws which I know were mercifully and impartially administered by Mr. Thom, the Recorder, and by the magistrates of the land.

On my return last summer from Fort Garry, when at Montreal, in Canada, I had the honour of two interviews with the Governor-general, at his desire, and *vivat voce* conveyed to his Lordship my opinions very much to the effect contained in the remarks I have the honour now to submit in writing for the information of Earl Grey.

I have, &c.

(signed) J. Crofton,  
Lieut.-Col. 6th Foot.

Enclosure in No. 23.

SOME REMARKS on the Charges (in Abstract) against the Hudson's Bay Company.

1st Charge.—THE character of the Government of the Hudson's Bay Company is peculiarly mild and paternal, especially in the regulations affecting the Indians in its territories. I have a personal knowledge of innumerable acts of benevolence, but I cannot remember even one instance of severity in the Government or its officers towards the Indians or residents in the territory.

Encl. in No. 23.

2d Charge.—The fullest refutation of this charge is, to be found in the fact, which I here attest, that in Red River colony there is a large and most flourishing settlement of Protestant converted Indians, and very many converts also to the Roman Catholic Church at Red River colony, at White Horse Plains, and at the Wabasining missions. I would refer to the published visit of the Bishop of Montreal, which was printed in 1846, for ample testimony to the exertions of the Hudson's Bay Company for the christianization of the Indians. The missions at Red River, Norway House, Beaver Creek, Brandon House, and Cumberland, &c., afford proof that the Hudson's Bay Company is not inattentive to the religious wants of the territory.

3d Charge.—I cannot see how the Hudson's Bay Company can be said to keep the Indians in ignorance, in the face of the facts above mentioned. The sole hope of Indian improvement lies in the necessary dependence of the Indians on the Hudson's Bay Company, and their being thereby induced to adopt more settled habits during the season when they cannot hunt, and to cultivate the soil at that season, as invited to do by the Hudson's Bay Company, but hitherto in vain, except at the Indian settlement of Red River.

4th Charge.

No. 23.  
Lieut.-Col. Crofton,  
to B. Hawes, Esq.,  
M. P.,  
12 February 1848.

\* See p. 98.

Remarks on Charges  
against Hudson's Bay  
Company.

4th Charge.—I do not understand this charge. The country is open, as respects passing and repassing through it. The Americans pass through it to Oregon, unmolested and unquestioned, and some reside in the territory; but they are restricted from trading in furs with the Indians.

5th Charge.—I can most distinctly pronounce this charge to be utterly false. Spirits have not, for some years, been sold or given to Indians, and very heavy fines are inflicted even for the very slightest deviation from the rigid regulations of the Hudson's Bay Company forbidding spirits, in any form and under any pretence, to be sold or given to Indians. Indeed, the more certainly to secure the observance of these regulations in distant districts, the Hudson's Bay Company deny their officers, and all under them, a supply of spirits for their own use, and even the Scotch settlers at Red River are prohibited from distilling or importing spirits; and the issue of spirits from the Hudson's Bay Company's stores is restricted to a very small quantity annually at Christmas, or on the occasion of marriages, issued as "Regal."

6th Charge.—I never heard of this complaint before. It was my duty to inquire into the means of subsistence in the territory generally, and I never learned that food was diminishing in the northern districts, nor that exorbitant prices were charged for goods in exchange for furs. It is not the practice of the Hudson's Bay Company to change the prices of any imported goods. Change of price is so little understood by the Indians, that the Hudson's Bay Company often sustain loss, rather than shake the confidence of the Indians in their good faith by alterations of price. This has often come under my personal observation.

7th Charge.—So far from extermination of the Indians going on, I am able to state that the contrary is the truth. I saw at Red River a census of the Indian tribes, taken at several periods, for the sole purpose of regulating the supply of goods for their use from England, and I noticed that the tribes have gradually been increasing since the union of the Northwest with the Hudson's Bay Company, and since the rigid prohibition placed on the sale or barter of spirits. I consider the officers and servants of the Hudson's Bay Company in no degree merit the epithets of "mercenary," "uneducated" and "worldly minded." They are generally liberal to a fault, usefully educated, and more observant of religion and morality than men in similar situations of life in England. Very many are of good families in the United Kingdom, and a few have raised themselves to distinction and opulence by their abilities and business habits, from being the humblest servants employed by the Hudson's Bay Company.

8th Charge.—I have known occasional instances of Indians and half-breeds who have smuggled furs procured in the Hudson's Bay Company's territory, across the frontier line, and bartered them with Americans for goods conveyed from the United States. These men, when detected, are deprived of the furs, which are forfeited, and in some instances of half-breeds at Red River, have been fined for breach of the laws. All are fully aware that they become delinquents by selling furs to the Americans, and never therefore dream of seeking protection from law for acts which they all know to be contrary to law.

9th Charge.—I have never seen any Reports from Sir George Simpson, nor the "Life of Thomas Simpson"; but I have heard often, at Red River, from various persons, that Mr. Alexander Simpson was a man of a disreputable character.

#### ADDITIONAL CHARGES.

1st and 2d Charge.—I do not know anything whatever about Mr. Beaver's representations. Slavery is utterly unknown.

3d Charge.—I remember to have heard that, some years ago, an Indian, in the Oregon territory, had for an adulterous purpose disguised himself as a woman; and had been emasculated by a man whose wife's virtue he had attempted. I never heard that this act was connived at, or permitted, or ordered, by any servant of the Hudson's Bay Company. It was always mentioned as an act of savage revenge, or retaliation, on the part of the husband, who detected the Indian in an indecent assault on his wife.

4th, 5th & 6th Charges.—Long as I was at the Red River, and much as I inquired respecting the country and its history, I never, even once, heard of the deeds mentioned. I cannot believe they took place; else in a community so small, where every occurrence is talked over, I must have heard them spoken of, especially by some who would gladly have attempted to justify their disloyal feeling by representing to me that the Hudson's Bay Company permitted lawless deeds.

Fermoy, 12 February 1848.

J. Crofton,  
Lieut.-Colonel, 6th Foot.

THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 103.

— No. 24. —

COPY of a LETTER from *B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.*, to Lieutenant-Colonel *Crofton.*

Sir,

Downing-street, 22 February 1848.

I AM directed by Earl Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant,\* forwarding remarks upon the charges brought against the Hudson's Bay Company by certain inhabitants of Prince Rupert's Land, and I am to express to you his Lordship's thanks for the trouble you have taken in communicating to him your views on this subject.

No. 24.

B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.,  
to Lieut.-Colonel  
Crofton,  
22 February 1848.

I have, &c.

(signed) *B. Hawes.*

— No. 25. —

COPY of a LETTER from *A. K. Isbister, Esq.*, to *B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.*

77, Jubilee-street, Mile-End-road,

Sir,

28 February 1848.

In the month of July\* last I addressed to Earl Grey a full and detailed reply to the Report of the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, on our memorial, in which the several allegations brought forward against that body by the natives of Rupert's Land were sustained and corroborated by references to a great variety of published works bearing on the subject of the Company's administration.

As you have made no reference to these documents in any of your communications, and as it is of great importance to us to ascertain whether his Lordship has received and perused them, I beg most respectfully to inquire whether the papers referred to have been received at the Colonel Office.

No. 25.

A. K. Isbister, Esq.,  
to B. Hawes, Esq.,  
M.P.,  
28 February 1848.

I have, &c.

(signed) *A. K. Isbister.*

— No. 26. —

COPY of a LETTER from *H. Merivale, Esq., M.P.*, to *A. K. Isbister, Esq.*

Sir,

Downing-street, 7 March 1848.

I HAVE received and laid before Earl Grey your letter, dated the 28th ultimo, inquiring whether your reply to the Report of the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company on the memorial from the natives of Rupert's Land has reached this office, and I am directed by his Lordship to inform you, that that document, dated the 9th August 1847, has been duly received by his Lordship, and is under consideration with the other papers bearing upon the case.

No. 26.

B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.,  
to A. K. Isbister,  
Esq.,  
7 March 1848.

I have, &c.

(signed) *H. Merivale.*

— No. 27. —

COPY of a LETTER from *A. K. Isbister, Esq.*, to *Earl Grey.*

77, Jubilee-street, Mile-End-road,

My Lord,

22 March 1848.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge a communication, dated 17th\* February, from Mr. Under-Secretary Hawes. I regret that from my inability to conceive any mode of "instituting an inquiry on the spot," except by means of a commission for the purpose, I should have fallen into the mistake to which your Lordship has referred. As, however, your Lordship states yourself to be in communication with the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company on the subject, I think it my duty to lay before you a correspondence which lately passed between Sir John Pelly and the memorialists, with an apparently similar object.

Apparently convinced in some degree of the justice of the complaints which had been addressed to your Lordship, that gentleman, at an interview to which he

No. 27.

A. K. Isbister, Esq.,  
to Earl Grey,  
22 March 1848.

\* Page 100.

invited me, offered to concede several of the most important points for which the petitioners contended, proposing further, that all disputed questions as to the Company's right of jurisdiction over the natives, the validity of the Charter of King Charles II., and other points, should be referred to your Lordship's decision. In an arrangement so equitable to all parties interested, the memorialists willingly concurred. We were much surprised, however, at receiving, after a considerable interval, a letter from Sir John Pelly, dated 8th January, in which he gave us to understand, that it had never been his intention to refer any proposition on the subject to your Lordship. Having no knowledge of the nature of his recent communications to your Lordship, or how far they may have arisen out of his previous proposition to the memorialists, I feel myself justified in laying the whole correspondence before you.

Understanding from Mr. Merivale's communication of the 7th instant, that the whole subject is at present under your Lordship's consideration, I take this opportunity also briefly to recapitulate a few of the most important points to which it was the object of the memorial and petition to draw the attention of Her Majesty's Government.

The chief evil arising out of the present system of administration, and which I would most respectfully urge upon your Lordship's consideration, is the anti-colonizing spirit manifested by the Hudson's Bay Company. Were their monopoly simply confined, as it should be, to the fur trade; and were they themselves the active agents in procuring the commodities they bring to market, its injurious operation would be less felt. Not satisfied, however, with this important and lucrative privilege, they lay claim equally to all the productions of the country, exercise a species of property in the natives, and an absolute right in the soil, of which they will neither make any beneficial use themselves nor suffer others. For a period of nearly two centuries, during which they have held possession, an immense territory, equal in extent to all Europe, and embracing every variety of climate, soil and natural production, has been suffered to remain in the condition of a wilderness, and its capabilities and resources been studiously concealed or misrepresented, for the selfish purpose of retaining it as an immense park for wild beasts, equally unprofitable to the nation and to its own inhabitants. The settlement on the Red River may possibly be considered an exception to this statement, but it should be borne in mind that it was not established by the Hudson's Bay Company, but by the late Earl Selkirk, from whose heirs it passed into the Company's possession shortly before their applying for a renewal of their last license, in 1838. Under the impolitic system which was thenceforward adopted, not an European emigrant, scarcely even a visitor, has been permitted to approach the colony; the settlers have found themselves subjected to the same jealous and illiberal policy which characterizes the operations of the fur trade; their energies paralyzed by inquisitorial and vexatious restrictions, and they themselves cut off from all communication with their fellow subjects of Great Britain, and exposed to the contamination of the worst class of the citizens of a neighbouring state, those who everywhere infesting the outskirts of civilization, are emancipated from all law and restraint themselves, and are the bane of all public order and tranquillity among those with whom they come in contact. Thus, while it is the true policy of this country to promote emigration, at least along the frontier, in order to counteract the effects of the rapid extension of the American settlements in this direction, the only British colony between Lake Superior and the Pacific Ocean is that established on the Red River, and which now appeals to your Lordship under the painful alternative expressed in the following sentence of the petition, which I here quote in proof of the pernicious tendency of the intercourse already adverted to, as springing up between the settlement and the United States. "Nous sommes près de la ligne territoriale; nous pourrions nous ranger sur le territoire voisin; nous y sommes invités; mais nous admirons la sagesse de la constitution Britannique, et nous en désirons les priviléges."

With respect to the natives scattered over the remaining portion of Rupert's Land, it must be evident that the monopoly established over them, and which was primarily intended for their advantage, is in its operation the very reverse of a benefit. Perpetuating, and indeed imposing upon them as a necessity of life, their present wandering and precarious habits, and thus withdrawing them from all settled or civilizing pursuits, it can be regarded in no other light than as a bounty on barbarism, an insuperable obstacle to all progress on industry, civilization and the

## THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 105

the diffusion of the Christian religion. Their present deplorable condition, though it may not have been brought about by any willing instrumentality of the Hudson's Bay Company, is, nevertheless, but too obviously the natural and inevitable result of a system, which, regarding them simply as the instruments of the aggrandizement of others, has been permitted for the last two centuries to grow up without any control, supervision or inquiry. To remedy these evils, it is the anxious desire of the inhabitants of Rupert's Land to have extended to them the protection of the British Government, either by the incorporation of the whole country with Canada, or by the establishment of a separate Government, as may be deemed advisable. It is believed that such an arrangement would not infringe upon any just rights of the Hudson's Bay Company, as without entering here into the question of the validity of the Charter of King Charles II., its legality is at least far from being generally acknowledged. As indicative of the feelings of commercial men in this country upon the subject, I have ventured to append to the correspondence between Sir John Pelly and the memorialists an extract from a leading Morning Journal<sup>\* Page 108.</sup> of this city, which places the whole question in a very clear light. By opening up a communication with Canada, not only would an intercourse with British subjects be promoted, but facilities be provided for the gradual occupation and cultivation of such portions of the country as are adapted for the purpose, while, by causing the productions of Rupert's Land to pass through Canada, instead of by the present route by Hudson's Bay, a common benefit would be conferred on the inhabitants of both.

With regard to the fur trade, it is for your Lordship to determine whether, in justice to the natives by whose labour alone it is sustained, it can much longer be suffered to continue on its present footing; whether, at least, in the event of its being deemed inexpedient to interfere with existing arrangements, it be not advisable to establish some more effectual provision for their well-being than at present exists—something analogous, for example, to the Indian department of Canada, or the Protectorship of Aborigines in New Zealand, and others of Her Majesty's colonies. With every desire to respect the just rights and privileges of the Hudson's Bay Company, I cannot refrain, on this occasion, from respectfully urging upon your Lordship, that in this question are involved objects of far higher importance than the material interests of any Company—the happiness, namely, and the prosperity and moral and religious advancement of human beings. The native inhabitants of Rupert's Land (among whom, I may observe, there is a large admixture of European blood, from intermarriage during a long period with the Company's servants, who are not permitted to contract marriages in Britain) have shown a more than ordinary aptitude for education, and the habits of civilized life. They would, I feel assured, prove themselves not unworthy and not ungrateful for your Lordship's interposition in their behalf.

I have, &c.  
(signed) A. K. Isbister.

Enclosure in No. 27.

CORRESPONDENCE between the Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company and A. K. Isbister.

### No. 1.

SIR J. H. Pelly would be glad to have a little conversation with Mr. Isbister, if he can make it convenient to call at the Hudson's Bay House on Friday next at 12 o'clock. Encl. in No. 27.

Hudson's Bay House, 1 September 1847.

[An interview accordingly took place, when a proposition was made to Mr. Isbister by Sir John Pelly, to submit the matter in dispute between the memorialists and the Hudson's Bay Company to the award of Earl Grey, which Mr. Isbister readily offered to lay before the memorialists].

### No. 2.

From Mr. Isbister to Sir John Pelly, agreeing on the part of the Memorialists to the above proposition.

77, Jubilee-street, Mile End-road,

12 November 1847.

Sir,

A VARIETY of reasons, arising chiefly from the absence from town at this season of our Parliamentary friends, whom it was necessary to consult in the matter, has hitherto prevented

vanted me from paying that prompt attention to your proposal for the amicable adjustment of our present differences which I could have wished, and you were entitled to expect.

To that proposal, being, as I understand it, to submit the whole question to the decision of Earl Grey, I have now to reply, that the memorialists are willing to accept it, feeling assured that his Lordship's award will make, all things considered, every reasonable provision for the well-being of those they represent.

In compliance with your request, I herewith transmit an abstract of the requisitions of the petitioners, as embodied in their instructions and petition, not however with any view of its being made the basis of any future arrangement, but that you may be fully acquainted with the sentiments and wishes of the people generally, which you complained of not being able to understand as they were expressed in the pamphlet.

It is but due to your offer, which I think honourable to yourself and to the Company, as indicative of a desire to do justice, to meet it frankly and in a corresponding spirit, and with this view I have prepared an outline (due regard being had, as far as possible, to the interests of the Company as of the Indians) of the chief points to which, in the event of Lord Grey's undertaking to mediate between us, I should feel anxious to draw his attention.

I cannot expect, that in every point embraced in the outline, we shall be agreed, neither do I think it necessary or essential that we should, as the subject will, I have no doubt, be viewed by Lord Grey with reference to considerations larger than the wishes of the petitioners, important as these are, for they are in an altogether peculiar position, and may be inclined as in some respects to ask more, so in others to ask less than national interests demand.

I shall be happy to wait upon you at any time you may appoint, and give you any further explanation or information you may desire.

I have, &c.

#### OBJECTS sought by the Petitioners.

1. Protection in their rights of liberty to trade in furs as well as every other production of the country. The natives of Rupert's Land, whether Indians or half-casts, consider that even had the charter of the Hudson's Bay Company been good and sufficient in point of law (which it is not), it could not deprive them of right inherent and inalienable in their ancestors, and, of course, inherited by them as their descendants. The charter being, however, illegal, and virtually admitted to be so by the Company themselves, by the fact of their having been under the necessity of petitioning Parliament for its confirmation, which they did in the year 1690 (see Journal of the House of Commons), the claims of the Hudson's Bay Company to the exclusive commerce of Hudson's Bay—untenable even as against other traders from Britain—are of no force whatever against the natives of the country, who, irrespective of all such considerations, have the right, of which no King or Parliament can deprive them, of trading with whom they please.
2. That all lands sold to settlers should be legally secured to them.
3. That the Company be bound to make payments, if so desired, in the current coin of the realm.
4. That the settlers be invested with full corporate rights, have the power of choosing their own magistrates, and a voice in the passing of their own laws.
5. That some provision be made for the independent administration of justice, and the adequate supervision of the Company's own officers.
6. That the laws in force in the colony for the prevention of the sale of spirituous liquors to the Indians be binding equally on the Company with the settlers.
7. That, in consideration of the Company's retaining in their own hands the entire commerce and shipping of the country, they provide in their vessels, at a reasonable charge, accommodation for the imports and exports of the colony.

#### No. 3.

From Sir John Pelly to A. K. Isbister, in Reply.

Sir,

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of yours of the 12th instant. I have read with attention your statement of the objects sought by the petitioners, which I do not understand any better than those expressed in the pamphlet.

As you offer to wait upon me at any time I will appoint, and give any further explanation or information I may require, I shall be glad to see you here on Wednesday, the 24th instant, at 1 o'clock; I am sorry I cannot name an earlier day, as I am going from home to-morrow, and shall not be back till Tuesday.

I am, &c.

(signed) J. H. Pelly.

[An interview took place accordingly, when Mr. Isbister gave the desired explanations. To prevent misunderstanding, Sir John Pelly agreed to write Mr. Isbister, giving his sense of the explanations which had been made, and accordingly two days after addressed him the subjoined letter.]

# THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 107

## No. 4:

Sir,

I wrote you on the 17th instant, requesting you to call on me yesterday, to explain some parts of the "objects sought by the petitioners," as stated in your letter of the 12th November. They are as follows, and as to which you gave the annexed explanation:

### EXPLANATION:

"Protection in their rights of liberty of trade in furs, as well as every other production of the country."

"The charter could not deprive the natives of Rupert's Land, whether Indians or half-castes, of rights inherent and inalienable in their ancestors, and of course inherited by them as their descendants."

"The Company's claims are of no force whatever against the natives of the country, who, irrespective of any such considerations, have the right, of which no King or Parliament can deprive them, of trading with whom they please."

This appeared to me to be the whole on which explanation was required.

I pointed out to you that as to the second object, there was a deed, which, when executed by persons wishing to settle at Red River, would secure the land granted to them. You stated there were conditions in it which the natives would not concede to. I gave you a copy to point out what they were, and to state the objection to them.

The third object I showed you was unnecessary.

The fourth, very questionable, vested in the Company by charter.

The fifth, sixth and seventh are in operation at the present time.

I am, &c.

(signed) *J. H. Pelly.*

Hudson's Bay House,  
26 November 1847.

[Mr. Isbister, according to Sir John Pelly's request, stated the objections entertained by the settlers at Red River to the land-deed, which in its operations, instead of encouraging, acts as a virtual prohibition of the colonization of the country by British subjects. He also adverted to the absence of any provision for the independent administration of justice in the country, the Recorder (so styled) of Red River being a paid servant of the Company; and pointed out the absence of any controlling power over the Company's own servants, who, in their intercourse with the natives, more especially as regards the distribution of spirituous liquors, and their arbitrary conduct towards the missionaries, abused the powers entrusted to them.]

In other respects Mr. Isbister considers Sir John Pelly's letter a fair account of what passed at the interviews.]

## No. 5.

From *A. K. Isbister* to *Sir John Pelly*, inquiring whether he had submitted the proposition to Earl Grey.

77, Jubilee-street, Mile-End-Road,

3 January 1848.

Sir,

I TAKE the liberty respectfully to inquire whether, according to the intention you expressed, at our last interview, you have submitted the proposition for the adjustment of the matter in dispute between the memorialists and the Hudson's Bay Company to Earl Grey.

As a considerable time has now elapsed since our last interview (Parliament also being shortly about to resume its sittings), I trust you will not consider this inquiry intrusive.

I have, &c.

(signed) *A. K. Isbister.*

## No. 6.

From *Sir John Pelly* to *A. K. Isbister*, in reply.

Sir,

In reply to your letter of the 3d instant, I beg to observe, that if at any time you have understood me to say that I would submit any proposition to Earl Grey, for settling what you term the matter in dispute between the memorialists and the Hudson's Bay Company, you are mistaken. What I did say was, I would give his Lordship, as Secretary of State, before whom you laid the memorial, every information in my power to enable him to judge

## 108. CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO COMPLAINTS OF

of the memorialists' complaints, and that on his Lordship's expressing his opinion, I should be disposed, without any appeal to the Legislature, to give that opinion the more favourable consideration. A moment's reflection must satisfy you that I have no power to submit matters of so much importance to the Company's interests to the award of any one.

I am, &c.

Hudson's Bay House,  
8 January 1848.

(signed) J. H. Pelly.

THE following is an Extract from the City Article of the "Morning Herald" of the 3d of June.

THE prospect of a new market for the disposal of our surplus manufactures is a subject of such paramount importance, that the expositors of the means of attaining it certainly have a strong claim to be considered and rewarded as public benefactors. Such a view has been opened to the consideration of the trading community in a small pamphlet, called "A Few Words on the Hudson's Bay Company," which has recently been published, and which places in a very powerful light the abuses and illegal usages of the Hudson's Bay Company. It appears that the Company was constituted in 1670, under a charter of Charles II, which gave them the powers of a mercantile sovereignty and supreme jurisdiction over all that part of America known as Rupert's Land. This charter was never confirmed by the Parliament, and consequently was not constitutional, or at all events failed to secure to the Company the privileges intended by the charter. In 1690 the Company was obliged to petition Parliament to confirm their charter, and, after considerable opposition, this was obtained for seven years only. It has not been since renewed. The Company, since that time, has been acting, without the necessary qualification, the part of a despotic power, and has carefully guarded against any possibility of the actual state of the case becoming known. The tyranny of the Company has at last roused the spirits of some gentlemen connected with the settlement, and, from the inquiries set on foot by them, the curious circumstance of the confirmation of the charter for seven years only by Parliament, in place of a perpetual one, has been discovered. The existence of a Company claiming such extensive privileges, and exercising sovereign power for such a length of time without any legal competency, nay, without the shadow of a right, unless the license renewed by the Crown in 1842, and which may be revoked at any time, to trade exclusively over those parts of the Indian country as were not included in the original charter, can be construed into such a power for doing so, is a circumstance which is of a perfectly unique character, and reflects little credit on the sagacity of our forefathers for permitting such abuses. This oversight of our ancestors, however, will not be without a benefit to the present and succeeding generations; for by it they have left a field in which much capital may be advantageously invested, and that at a profit which, if by a fair competition it be rendered less than that received by the parties who at present monopolise the trade, will still amply repay the enterprise and skill which should prompt and carry it out.

But it is not merely from the fact of the benefit which will arise to trade that this matter demands consideration, but on far higher grounds. It is shown, on evidence which is scarcely dubitable, that the Indian race is gradually becoming extinct. In consequence of the encroachments made on their hunting-grounds they are not able to obtain a sufficiency of food, and from the perils and arduous nature of the calling which they have been necessitated to adopt, and by famine, immense numbers die off yearly. The Company, apparently, have carefully prevented the enlightenment and civilization of these people by the exclusion of missionaries, and the discouragement of everything like education, thinking, probably, that the enormous prices received by them in exchange for the miserable commodities furnished, would undergo a great diminution, and that the Indians, who are virtually in a state of slavery, might, as they gained a knowledge of their rights, claim that freedom which is the inalienable attribute of every human being.

The natural productions of the country are furs, silver, copper, lead, tallow, hides, wool, wood, corn, &c., all articles of immense utility, and the encouragement of the export of which, by the preservation of the native population, and their instruction in the arts of civilized life, will lead to the consumption of a quantity of our manufactures.

—No. 28.—

COPY of a LETTER from B. Hawes, Esq., M.P., to A. K. Isbister, Esq.

No. 28.

Sir,

Downing-street, 31 March 1848.

B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.,  
to A. K. Isbister,  
Esq.,  
31 March 1848.

I AM directed by Earl Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your further letter of the 22d instant, on the subject of the complaints of the inhabitants of Rupert's Land of the conduct of the Hudson's Bay Company.

I have, &c.

(signed) B. Hawes.

—No. 29.—

THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 109

— No. 29.—

COPY of a LETTER from *B. Hawes*, Esq., M.P., to Major *Griffiths*, 6th Foot, Fermoy.

Sir,

Downing-street, 13 January 1849.

HER Majesty's Government have had for some time under their consideration a series of charges which have been brought against the Hudson's Bay Company, in respect of their conduct, both commercial and political, in the territory over which their chartered rights are understood to extend, and in particular their management of the settlement at Red River.

No. 29.

*B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.  
to Major Griffiths,  
13 January 1849.*

It is hardly necessary to mention to you, who are acquainted with the countries in question, the difficulty which Earl Grey has experienced in causing the inquiries which appeared necessary to be made, and in procuring information from competent and disinterested parties. His Lordship is informed that you have recently returned from the command of the troops at Fort Gauy, where you have succeeded Lieutenant-colonel Crofton; and he is very anxious to have the benefit of your experience and information.

I am directed, therefore, by his Lordship to transmit to you an abstract of the principal documents which have been received in this department, containing charges of the description above mentioned against the Company, and his Lordship will esteem it as a favour if you will, at your convenience, favour him with your opinion thereupon, so far as you have been enabled to form one from personal observation, or from reports on which you think reliance can be placed.

*Appended to Major  
Griffiths' reply of  
18 January 1849.*

I have, &c.

(signed) *B. Hawes.*

— No. 30.—

COPY of a LETTER from Major *Griffiths* to Earl *Grey*:

My Lord,

Fermoy, Ireland, 18 January 1849.

I HAVE been honoured with your Lordship's commands, conveyed in a letter from Mr. Hawes of the 13th instant (accompanied by enclosures herewith returned) upon the subject of certain allegations made against the government of the Hudson's Bay Company, and upon which your Lordship desires information, founded upon my own experience, or upon reports upon which I would place reliance.

No. 30.

*Major Griffiths to  
Earl Grey,  
18 January 1849.*

As regards the accusations against the Honourable Company which form the subject-matter of Beaver's letter, I have endeavoured to reply, after most considerate attention to each point alleged therein, to the best of my personal observation, and to the information collected during a residence of 14 months at the Red River settlement, in command of Her Majesty's troops.

With reference to the petition to Her Majesty, which sets forth the grievances under which the French half-breed settlers are supposed to be suffering, under the rule of the said Honourable Company, I have also endeavoured, by taking the subject point by point, as detailed in the said petition, and copying the preamble of each paragraph only, to make your Lordship acquainted with all that affects the truth or otherwise of the different causes of complaint therein alleged.

In conclusion, I beg to be allowed your Lordship's consideration, should the information that I have been requested to furnish, fall short of your expectation.

I have, &c.

(signed) *John Griffiths, Major, 6th Foot,  
late in Command of  
H. M. Troops, Hudson's Bay.*

## 110 CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO COMPLAINTS OF

## Enclosure in No. 30.

Enc. in No. 30.

As far as my experience serves, this assertion is most untrue.

This charge most unfounded. The Company have religious establishments, Catholic as well as Protestant, presided over by Bishops and other clergymen, in every part of their vast territories. In addition to these, missionaries from different societies at home, and I believe partly at the Company's expense, are established at every large trading-post; and as regards the Red River, a large colony of christianized Indians are settled on its banks, about 30 miles below the seat of Government at Upper Fort Gauy, under the superintendence of a highly respectable and talented missionary, the Rev. Mr. Smithers, whose instructions are not merely of a religious character, but extend to every useful and domestic art. Again, at Norway House post, at the northern extremity of Lake Winnipeg, there is a large and flourishing missionary establishment; of these I can speak confidently, and also from information, that similar establishments exist in various parts of the country.

I confess I do not understand this: how a country, where there is eight months winter, and snow on the ground for the whole period, is to be opened up, is to me a riddle.

Quite untrue, as far as my observation and information extend; but the Company had in a very liberal, although perhaps mistaken spirit, permitted some of these very grumbler to import spirits into the colony from America, a system which had a most pernicious effect during the stay of Her Majesty's troops at the station, and which I assisted in getting repealed, in my place in council, previous to our departure.

Other causes have been assigned by competent authority for the disappearance of animals which form part of the food of the natives, than the hunting excursions. From personal observation, I can form no decided opinion upon the charges here set forth, but firmly disbelieve that destitution exists to the extent here described, or that it is greater or even as great as that experienced amongst the poorer classes over all civilized Europe.

I believe also, that every precaution is taken by the Government to assist the natives in time of need, and that the character drawn of the Company's servants by "Beaver," is gratuitously false, from my own personal knowledge of and acquaintance with many of their officers, both in the service at present as well as retired from it.

I am unaware what the exact rights of the Company are in this respect.

I have never met with the work here alluded to, and can form no comparison.

J. Griffiths,  
Major 6th Foot.  
18 January 1849.

## ABSTRACT of the Principal Charges against the Hudson's Bay Company.

1. THAT the government of the Hudson's Bay Company's territories is administered in a harsh and oppressive spirit.

2. That although one of the conditions of the Company's charter was, that they should christianize the heathens, and although the revenue which they have acquired by their trade, amounts to 250,000 £. per annum; they have taken no steps towards that object.

3. That, on the contrary, they have kept the Indians in ignorance, in order to perpetuate their dependence.

under the superintendence  
of the Rev. Mr. Smithers,  
*Smithers*

4. That the opening up of the country, which was also a condition of the charter, has been equally neglected.

5. That notwithstanding a solemn agreement with the Government to the contrary, the Company have recommenced the sale of spirits to the natives.

6. That by reason of the hunting excursions, the food in the northern districts, is gradually disappearing; that the inhabitants are in consequence exposed to frightful destitution, which is aggravated by the exorbitant prices charged by the Hudson's Bay Company for goods given in exchange for furs.

7. That if timely precautions are not taken, the natives of these regions must be gradually exterminated by famine, and that no such precautions are to be expected from the Company's servants, who are mercenary, uneducated and worldly-minded.

8. That the natives having attempted to trade on their own account, their goods have been seized by the Company's agents under colour of the provisions of the charter, and that the natives have been unable to obtain redress from the local courts.

9. That the reports of the proceedings of the Company, sent home by Sir G. Simpson, and published in England, are untrue, as will be seen on contrasting them with the account given in the Life of Thomas Simpson, published by his brother, Alexander Simpson.

ADDITIONAL

## THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 111.

ADDITIONAL Charges brought forward  
in Mr. Beaver's Letter.

1. THAT his representations to the Company were disregarded.
2. That some of the Indians are held in slavery by the Company's servants, and by settlers who have formerly been in the service.
3. That in February 1835 an Indian had been emasculated, with the connivance and permission, if not by the orders of the officer in charge.
4. That in the summer of 1836 six Indians had been wantonly and gratuitously murdered by a party of trappers and sailors, landed from one of the Company's vessels; that the circumstance had been reported to the authorities at Vancouver, but no notice taken of it; that the same party, with the same leader, "one of the most infamous murderers of a murderous fraternity," was annually sent to the same vicinity, and that the life of an Indian was never yet, by a trapper, put in competition with a beaver's skin.
5. That he, Mr. Beaver, had been "credibly informed" that in the early part of 1836 the same party had killed one Indian, wounded another, and thrown a child into the fire, in the course of a quarrel; that they had put four Indians to death for stealing their horses; that they afterwards killed 10 or 12 more in cold blood, and burned their village, and that "unbecoming" as such deeds are to Christians, they are connived at, and even assisted by the Hudson's Bay Company.
6. That he had recently learned from "good authority," that in August 1840 an Indian was hanged, several others shot, and their village set on fire by order of Chief Factor M'Laughlin, to avenge the death of a man who was killed in a fray.

### MEMORANDUM upon the Petition of the French "Half-breeds" of the Red River Settlements, Hudson's Bay Territory.

I AM not aware what these promises consisted in; one thing is certain, that the French "half-breeds" live from hand to mouth, and have never produced, to my knowledge, even sufficient grain for their own consumption.

What this monopoly, as they term it, can have to do with the Red River settlement, or become a cause of complaint to the settlers, I cannot comprehend.

In the preceding paragraph they complain of promises unfulfilled since the year 1811, when their fathers were drawn to the country, and here talk of a monopoly under which their forefathers suffered for 176 years.

"ATTIRES par de pompeuses promesses," &c. &c.

"Le monopole qui depuis environ cent soixante et seize ans pèse sur nous," &c. &c.

## Memorandum—continued.

It is perfectly clear that the late Earl of Selkirk never could have promised any of his settlers that they should be permitted to interfere with the vested rights of the Company, and therefore it is still more unlikely that on the resumption of the settlement by the Company, such a question could ever have been agitated.

The Scotch settlers, who were located at the same time, make no claim, no complaint, as far as I have heard, of this nature; they are of domestic habits, prudent and careful, and seldom leave their farms or peaceful occupations.

The French settlers (who are chiefly "half-breeds"), on the other hand, are a lawless, roving race; their farms are quite a secondary consideration, or perhaps of none at all, further than to the extent to which they are managed by a few old men and women who may be left at home upon the migration periodically of the rest.

All their thoughts are centered in "hunting the buffalo," and twice a year, in June and August, they leave the settlement to a distance of some 300 or 400 miles, some indeed wintering on the plains. The return with the buffalo meat is a season of reckless improvidence; nothing is thought of but feasting, and long before the dreary winter's terminated, many are starving.

This petition, therefore, from the habits and character of these people, might be viewed, not, I presume, in the light of one praying for redress of grievances, in as far as regards the government and municipal economy of the Red River settlement, but as an attempt to obtain a participation in the advantages derived by the Company from their vested rights (to which, I imagine, the Red River settlers have about as much claim as a South Australian colonist), or as an excuse for providing the means for increasing their roving habits.

There is a very able and talented Recorder, who if not paid by the Company would be by the Crown; in any case not by the people.

The councillors are selected from the best classes in the settlement, but certainly not from the French half-breeds, who are at present neither from position, habits or character fitted for legislators.

The French Roman Catholic Bishop is one.

Magistrates are selected from those best qualified, and the administration of the law is precisely in accordance with the course in England. The juries of 12 are constituted as at home, and I believe the French half-breeds are allowed some peculiarity as to challenge; at all events there is generally a mixture in the composition of the juries.

I have no information upon this point; it is quite a new feature to me, the idea of the settlers at the Red River imagining that the territory of the Hudson's Bay Company forms a part of their settlement.

The idea of any collision happening, I consider very vague. Could the French half-breeds be reconciled to adopt the same mode of life as their brother settlers, the Scotch, and that the country (settlement rather) increased its production of grain and cattle, which alone can be called its legitimate riches, I have no doubt they would soon have an outlet.

The Red River settlement will never become "un grenier à blé" by the exertions of the French half-breeds, as long as their present habits exist.

*J. Griffiths,  
Major, 6th Foot.*

18 January 1849.

"La justice l'administre ici par un juge sol de par la Compagnie," &c. &c.

"Nous osons humblement émettre la pensée que des juges de paix, ou magistrats," &c. &c.

"Par le monopole accordé à la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson," &c. &c.

"Nos terres sont fertiles, et aisées à cultiver," &c. &c.

THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 113

— No. 31. —

COPY of a LETTER from *B. Hawes*, Esq., M.P., to *A. K. Isbister*, Esq.

Sir,

Downing-street, 23 January 1849.

With reference to the charges which you have brought at different times against the Hudson's Bay Company; and which have formed the subject of correspondence between yourself and this office for a considerable time, I am directed to inform you, that Earl Grey has lately received a report from Major Griffiths, recently in command of Her Majesty's troops at Fort Garry, to whom his Lordship had communicated the petition of certain residents of the Red River settlement. Major Griffiths' report touches on most of your charges, so far as they regard the administration of that settlement; it is in full accordance with a former one, received from Lieutenant-colonel Crofton, the predecessor of Major Griffiths in that command; the witnesses have no longer any connexion with the Company, and both may therefore fairly be regarded as unbiased, as well as fully informed, and both exculpate the Company from a portion of the charges, while they avow themselves ignorant of the remainder, which are left, as they were when first brought forward, unsupported by distinct and trustworthy evidence; on the contrary, the substance of these accounts is, that much credit is due to the Company for the manner in which it has of late years exercised its powers, which accords with such other information as Lord Grey has been able to obtain.

No. 31.  
B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.,  
to A. K. Isbister,  
Esq.,  
23 January 1849.

Under these circumstances, his Lordship feels it his duty not to prolong the state of suspense which has been occasioned by the long pending inquiries on this subject. As the Government of the territory in question is invested by their charter in the Hudson's Bay Company, and as this charter, which has been recognized by Acts of Parliament, has not made the Company responsible to the Secretary of State for the manner in which the large powers entrusted to them are exercised, Lord Grey has felt from the first that any interference on his part was only justified by the consideration, that if the charges of gross oppression and mis-government which have been brought against the Company could have been shown to rest on grounds of probability, it would have been the duty of Her Majesty's Government to have applied to Parliament for the necessary powers for instituting a searching inquiry into the truth of those charges, and had they been proved, then for the adoption of such measures as might have been found best calculated to redress whatever wrong or injustice might have been inflicted in even the remotest parts of Her Majesty's extended possessions in North America. Nothing, however, but a strong *prima facie* case against the Company would, in Lord Grey's opinion, have justified Her Majesty's Government in recommending to Parliament, by such an extraordinary interposition of its supreme authority, to interfere with the regular exercise of the jurisdiction granted to the Company by charter, and sanctioned by usage and the language of statutes. But far from having established such an apparent case against the Company, the only trustworthy information Lord Grey has been able to obtain, tends completely to negative all that has been alleged against that body on those points to which this information applies, leaving unrefuted no other charges but those as to which the persons from whom information has been sought, have been unable to afford it, and which have been met by a direct denial by the Company, while at the same time they are in a great measure deprived of weight by the contradiction given to the parties from whom they proceed, on the points on which their assertions admitted of being tested by an appeal to impartial evidence.

Such being the result of the best inquiry he has been able to institute, Lord Grey has arrived at the conclusion, that there are no grounds for making any application to Parliament on the subject of the oppression alleged by you to have been suffered by the inhabitants of the territory over which the powers of the Hudson's Bay Company extend, and that no further interference on his part ought to take place; he can, therefore, only refer you to the Company, which, as he is assured, will readily consider any representations which may be made of substantial grievances.

I have, &c.

(signed) *B. Hawes.*

—No. 32.

COPY of a LETTER from *B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.*, to Sir *J. H. Pelly, Bart.*

No. 32.

*B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.,  
to Sir J. H. Pelly,  
Bart.*

Sir, Downing-street, 23 January 1849.

I AM directed by Earl Grey to transmit to you, for the information of the Directors of the Hudson's Bay Company, the copy of a letter which his Lordship has caused to be addressed to Mr. Isbister, on the subject of the charges which he has at different times brought forward against the Company.

*23 January, p. 113.* The letter will explain the reasons for which his Lordship has thought it advisable not to prolong any further the inquiries which have been made respecting the administration of your settlement on the Red River. I am to add, that his Lordship has lately received from the Governor-general of British North America a copy of a series of accusations, made by Mr. Kennedy, a former servant of the Company, against that body, in respect of alleged transactions in another portion of the Company's territory, in the East Main, together with Sir G. Simpson's answers; and the result is, to leave his Lordship under the distinct impression that those accusations also are in part undeserving of credit, in part so unimportant, as not to merit inquiry.

Under these circumstances, Lord Grey is happy in feeling himself justified in taking no further steps in the prosecution of these inquiries, and in not incurring the great additional delay which must be occasioned by waiting for the answer to some questions which his Lordship had addressed to the Governor of Assiniboia, before the receipt of Major Griffiths' Report, instead of declaring himself satisfied at the present stage of the inquiry. And his Lordship trusts, that the great authority which the Company exercise under their charter, will always be used with an enlightened regard to the benefit of the scattered population under their charge, and with due consideration for the reasonable claims and complaints of every portion of Her Majesty's subjects within the limits of their jurisdiction.

I have, &c.  
(signed) *B. Hawes.*

—No. 33.—

COPY of a LETTER from *B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.*, to Major *Griffiths.*

No. 33.

*B. Hawes, Esq., M.P.,  
to Major Griffiths,  
31 January 1849.*

\* Page 109.

Sir,

Downing-street, 31 January 1849.

I AM directed by Earl Grey to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant, returning the abstract of the charges preferred against the Hudson's Bay Company, together with your remarks upon them, and I am to express to you Lord Grey's thanks for the trouble you have taken in examining these allegations, and for the information you have afforded his Lordship upon the subject of them.

I have, &c.  
(signed) *B. Hawes.*

—No. 34.—

COPY of a LETTER from Sir *J. H. Pelly, Bart.* to Earl *Grey.*

My Lord,

Hudson's Bay House, 27 January 1849.

No. 34.  
Sir J. H. Pelly,  
Bart., to Earl Grey,  
27 January 1849.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of a letter from Mr. Under-Secretary Hawes, dated the 23d instant, intimating to me that your Lordship feels justified in not taking any further steps in the prosecution of the inquiries set on foot in consequence of the charges brought against the Hudson's Bay Company by Mr. A. K. Isbister and by Mr. William Kennedy, and in not incurring the great additional delay which must be occasioned by waiting for the answer to some questions which your Lordship had addressed to the Governor of Assiniboia before the receipt of Major Griffiths' Report, instead of declaring yourself satisfied at the present stage of the inquiry.

I have

THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED RIVER SETTLEMENT. 115

I have also received from Mr. Hawes a copy of a letter addressed by him to Mr. Isbister, under the same date, and from Mr. Merivale a copy of a despatch \* See p. 8. addressed by your Lordship to the Governor-general of Canada, in which communications the grounds of your decision in regard to the charges of Mr. Isbister and Mr. Kennedy are respectively stated.

I have laid these documents before the Deputy-governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company, who concur with me in expressing satisfaction at a result which we had from the beginning confidently anticipated, and in assuring your Lordship, that the Company will continue to exercise the authority with which they are invested in a liberal spirit, and with an anxious desire to promote the welfare of all classes of the population within their jurisdiction.

I have, &c.  
(signed) J. H. Pelly.

HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.  
(RED RIVER SETTLEMENT.)

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COPY of MEMORIAL and PETITION from Inhabitants of the *Red River Settlement*, complaining of the Government of the Hudson's Bay Company, and REPORTS and CORRESPONDENCE on the subject of the Memorial.

(*Earl of Lincoln.*)

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*Ordered, by The House of Commons to be Printed  
23 April 1849.*

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[Price 1s. 3d.]

227.

*Under 20 oz.*

